

Ripe for Cooperation or Rivalry? Commerce, Realpolitik, and War Memory in Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations

YINAN HE

Abstract: *Sino-Japanese political relations, fraught with disputes and tension during the Koizumi years, only began to recover after Abe came to power. This article investigates the driving forces shaping recent and future bilateral relations. Using evidence from the Koizumi era, I argue that 1) bilateral commercial links prove a weak stabilizing factor for political relations; 2) the current distribution of power between China and Japan does not dictate their strategic rivalry, but they may still treat each other as rivals if they perceive the danger of long-term power transition and mutual hostile intent; 3) the frequent flare-up of bilateral history disputes can exacerbate mutual threat perceptions among elites and generate popular emotional pressure for hard-line government policy toward the other country. The future of Sino-Japanese cooperation heavily depends on their efforts to resolve the negative historical legacy.*

Introduction

In the early 1990s some IR scholars argued that Asia was “ripe for rivalry” because the bipolar structure of the Cold War was giving way to an unstable multipolarity in the region, and a lack of regional institutions, common values, and collective identity coupled with the rise of China further complicated the Asian security order. Aaron Friedberg in particular predicted that East Asian countries would undertake intense arms races, and that the smaller states would choose sides among the regional powers, allying with some to balance against others.¹ This pessimistic view has been contested in recent years, however, as many observe that the region is fast developing economic interdependence and security cooperation. Besides, China is increasingly being viewed as a benign, status quo power, leading other smaller Asian countries away from forming a coalition to contain it.² Indeed, since 2001 China’s “New Diplomacy” of engaging regional institutions and its neighboring countries, including some former enemies like South Korea, Vietnam and India, has effectively soothed the region’s fear of its increasing power.³

A notable exception to this rosy picture of China’s friendly relationships with its Asian neighbors is in Sino-Japanese relations. A smooth relationship between China and Japan, the two largest economic and political powerhouses in East Asia, is crucially important to regional stability and prosperity. Yet despite this need, their political ties over the past decade have been full of twists and turns. Serious bilateral political

The author wishes to thank Michael Chambers, Elizabeth Dahl, Christina Davis, M. Taylor Fravel, Amy Freedman, Edward Friedman, Michael Glosny, Peter Gries, Llewelyn Hughes, Tae-hyung Kim, Shogo Suzuki, Takaaki Mizuno, and two anonymous reviewers for valuable comments and suggestions on previous drafts of this article. Address correspondence to: Yinan He, John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Seton Hall University, 400 South Orange Ave., South Orange, NJ 07078, USA. E-mail: heyinan@shu.edu

friction arose during the mid-1990s over China's nuclear tests, offshore island disputes, Taiwan controversy, and Japan's treatment of Sino-Japanese War history. After a short relaxation of tensions in 1999–2001, their political relationship deteriorated again under the Koizumi administration. Top-level diplomacy was virtually paralyzed due to Beijing's protest at Koizumi's annual visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto temple in Tokyo commemorating Japanese war dead, including Class-A war criminals from World War II. The fallout from these visits has been exacerbated by a plethora of political disputes in recent years.⁴ Beijing lamented that bilateral political relations dropped to the "lowest point since diplomatic normalization in 1972,"⁵ and declared improvement a hopeless cause as long as Koizumi was in power.⁶ After Abe succeeded Koizumi in September 2006, he refrained from committing to visit Yasukuni and a bilateral summit meeting quickly resulted. While some believe the stalemate has entered its twilight stages, others suspect the relationship remains fragile given Abe's ambiguous attitude on the issue of history, his active push for constitutional revision, and the renewed disputes over offshore islands and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) in East China Sea (ECS).⁷

Not only is Japan one of the few countries with which China's relationship has worsened rather than improved under its "New Diplomacy," but their tensions have also occurred despite a number of factors that objectively should have promoted their cooperation. Two such examples are the high level of commercial interactions between China and Japan, and their shared strategic goal of maintaining a nuclear-free, stable Korean Peninsular. Their interests should continue to converge in the context of increased institutional building toward both an economic and security community in East Asia. Despite these factors Sino-Japanese relations have remained deeply troubled, which is particularly puzzling to students of East Asian international relations.

Efforts to grapple with the trajectory of Sino-Japanese relations have largely centered on three different driving forces. The first is the salutary effect of the close bilateral economic interactions which, according to commercial liberalism, should promote a harmonious political relationship. However, Section I of this article shows that during the Koizumi years Japanese and Chinese policymakers felt neither strong economic incentives nor business lobby pressure to adopt an accommodative policy towards the other nation.

The second driving force is the effect of *realpolitik*. Some realists believe that the post-Cold War multipolar structure in East Asia combined with uneven economic growth between China and Japan have set the stage for a Sino-Japanese strategic rivalry and dampened their incentives for cooperation. I argue in Section II that a static, simplistic realist approach stemming merely from current power distribution in East Asia is insufficient to explain Sino-Japanese diplomatic setbacks during the Koizumi years as the balance of power did not suddenly shift, the conflict of interest between the two remained mild, and their political disputes did not involve vital national interests. However, if applying a more fine-grained realist view that takes into account not just states' capabilities in the near future but also their feeling of uncertainty regarding long-term power trends as well as mutual perceptions of intent, one can better understand the sense of anxiety and mutual suspicion bedeviling Sino-Japanese relations.

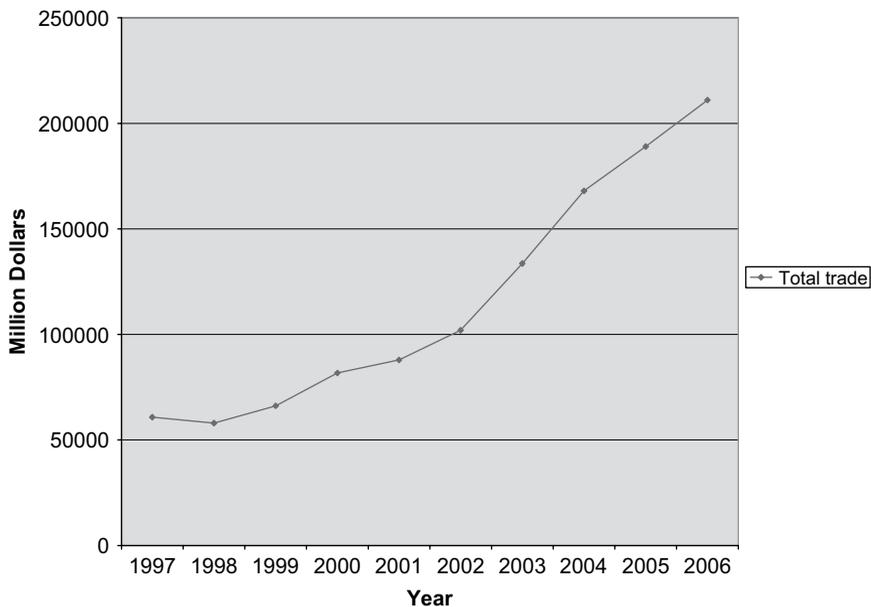
One of the most important sources of Chinese and Japanese concerns for mutual intent is the contested war history of the 1930s–40s, which is the third driving force shaping bilateral relations. In Section III I demonstrate that the emotional and perceptual power of conflicting war memories can heighten the distrust between Chinese and Japanese elites, as well as motivate hawkish public demands for confrontational government policy to handle bilateral disputes. In the past few years, the history factor reinforced, or even exaggerated, realpolitik concerns and significantly worsened political relations.

The Weak Influence of Commercial Ties

Sino-Japanese economic interactions grew rapidly during the Koizumi years. Figure 1 shows that bilateral trade increased at a much faster pace during 2001–06 than in previous years. China replaced the US as Japan's No. 1 trade partner from 2004 on, and Japan was China's top trade partner for 11 years, only falling slightly behind the EU and US since 2004. Japanese FDI to China has also surged since 1998; China is now by far the largest destination for Japanese investment in Asia.⁸

Optimistic media and scholars suggest that such deepening economic interactions should serve as a stabilizing force in Sino-Japanese relations, citing the Manchester liberal view that free trade facilitates the harmony of interests and maintenance of peace.⁹ Recent studies on economic interdependence suggest that it can discourage war policy because economic cost will arise when war disrupts commerce.¹⁰ While the literature emphasizes the correlation between commerce and the reduced likelihood of war, a liberal IR scholar may posit that commerce can also moderate mutual policy in times

FIGURE 1
CHINA–JAPAN TOTAL TRADE, 1997–2006.



Source: Direction of Trade Statistics, IMF.

short of war for fear that a rapidly worsening political relationship will eventually harm economic interest.

Following Ikenberry and Mastanduno, this moderating effect of commercial ties can occur through two mechanisms: first, “states become reluctant to disrupt or jeopardize the welfare benefits of open economic exchange,” and second, “domestic interest groups with a stake in interdependence constrain the ability of the state to act autonomously.”¹¹ As for the former mechanism, assuming that Chinese and Japanese leaders had an important political stake in maximizing economic growth, they should refrain from actions that threaten to harm it.¹² The latter mechanism means business groups with strong interest in bilateral economic interaction should lobby decision-makers towards moderate diplomatic positions. The precondition for these mechanisms to function is that national macroeconomic performance and/or the relevant business groups either have been or are feared to be negatively affected by bilateral political tension.¹³

However, during the Koizumi era the precondition for the two mechanisms to play a constraining role was lacking. On the first mechanism, during 2001–06 China and Japan’s economies both grew steadily despite the frequent political/diplomatic turbulence. In the absence of obvious macroeconomic damage, there should be no strong economic incentives for national leaders to alter their diplomatic positions.

One may argue that the leaders should still feel pressure to make certain conciliatory gestures, such as to refrain from visiting Yasukuni and resume summit meetings, if they *fear* long-term economic damage should bilateral interdependence become compromised by political problems. But two conditions need to be satisfied for this fear to take real effect. One is that the damage must be sufficiently heavy should the commercial ties be severely compromised in the future. Yet the rupture of Sino-Japanese commercial ties may not be unbearably costly because the two countries do not rely on each other for strategically important goods like energy resources, and both China and Japan can easily find ready alternatives, albeit at a slightly higher price, to substitute for each other’s export market, manufacturing bases, and industrial products.¹⁴ The other condition is that the decision-makers should believe that political problems, if not resolved, would ultimately compromise bilateral commercial relations. However, while the booming commercial ties with China are often considered as a major contributor to Japanese economic recovery, many in Japan believed the economic and political aspects of the relationship were mutually isolated, as in the so-called “cold politics–hot economy” (*seirei-keinetsu*) paradox. Koizumi for one openly claimed that his Yasukuni visits “would not impede economic ties and personnel exchanges with China.”¹⁵

Chinese policy elites were split on the connection between the “cold politics” and “hot economy.” One school echoed the Japanese notion that the economic aspect was unaffected by politics.¹⁶ The opposite claimed that the economic interaction was not hot, given the slow growth of bilateral trade and stagnation of large cooperative projects, and would turn cold sooner or later if political relations continued to deteriorate.¹⁷ A subtle variation of this view argued that regardless of the economic cost of political tensions, the Chinese should maintain the inseparability of economics and politics lest it play into the hands of Japanese right-wingers who used *seirei-keinetsu* to resist compromise on such political issues as the Yasukuni visits.¹⁸

Still, should the “cold politics” indeed hurt the economy, Chinese policy elites believed that either any “relative loss” in this relationship would favor China or they insisted that political principles should not be sacrificed for economic interest. Specifically, one strongly held view was that Japan’s economic well-being depended much more on China than China’s did on Japan,¹⁹ thus even though Chinese economic interests were also at stake, it was the Japanese side that should be more eager to improve political relations.²⁰ Still some contended that both countries had a heavy stake in the commercial links, but even they refrained from advising the Chinese government to be conciliatory since issues like Yasukuni involved Chinese political principles that should never be compromised.²¹

As for the second constraining mechanism, the business lobby, its function is plausible due to a significant component of the bilateral trade increase in recent years being driven by Japanese FDI to China. If political turbulence threatened the business operation of these firms in China, they were likely to lobby the government to moderate political tension. While survey data suggest that some Japanese firms indeed incurred costs during the anti-Japanese demonstrations of April 2005, even more firms reported no serious losses during this period.²² Meanwhile, the majority of Japanese firms worried about the negative impact of political turbulence on the future Japanese economy, and those industrial sectors with a heavy stake in China were particularly concerned.²³

However, there is little evidence to suggest that the Japanese business circle actively pushed the Koizumi administration to soften its policy toward China.²⁴ The position of Japan’s biggest business organization, Keidanren, on Koizumi’s China policy was at most ambivalent. In September 2005, Keidanren Chairman Okuda secretly visited China twice, meeting with both Premier Wen Jiabao and President Hu Jintao, respectively. Between the two meetings he met with Koizumi in Tokyo, where he was believed to have relayed messages between the two governments on the issue of Yasukuni. Yet officially Keidanren declined to comment on the Okuda-Hu talks, and Okuda soon said publicly that Koizumi’s shrine visits were affecting Sino-Japanese political relations, but that there had been no major change on the economic front.²⁵ Moreover, at a later press conference when Okuda called for improving relations with China lest the commercial ties be jeopardized, the soon-to-be chairman of Keidanren, Mitarai, backed Koizumi’s foreign policy and suggested that when political trouble happened the business should try to bridge the gap.²⁶

One likely explanation for Keidanren’s lukewarm attitude is that political turbulence had not heavily damaged Japanese business interests. Concerns for the long-term impact indeed arose among some business elites, but they either lacked the support of a unified, corporate-based lobbying machine to exert any significant political influence or their economic concerns were offset by nationalist sentiments that resisted compromise with China. In May 2006, the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (*Keizai Dōyūkai*) issued a written proposal urging Koizumi to stop the Yasukuni visits, the first such call by a key Japanese business organization.²⁷ However, *Dōyūkai*’s lobbying power is weak as its members participate as individuals free of corporate identities.²⁸ Still, some *Dōyūkai* members supported Koizumi’s shrine visits and resented the association for overruling their opinion. Because of the internal rift and external pressure it experienced after issuing the proposal, *Dōyūkai* soon became silent on the Yasukuni issue.²⁹

The dissidents within *Dōyūkai* were not alone; quite a few Japanese businessmen, though fearing long-term economic damage from the “cold politics,” felt the government should not yield to Chinese pressure. In a April 2005 poll of young businessmen from the Japan Junior Chamber who were both doing business in China and South Korea and active in citizen level diplomacy, 69 percent of the over 3,000 respondents believed that “the cause [of anti-Japanese protests] does not lie on the Japanese side.” When asked to suggest ways to maintain amicable relations, 79 percent of respondents answered “not to listen to the Chinese and ROK demands,” and 72 percent criticized the Japanese government for “failing to take a firm stance.”³⁰ Similar to the Chinese policy elites discussed above, Japanese business leaders were not single-minded in maximizing profit; they too were subject to the countervailing sentiment that Japan’s political interest must be defended even if it meant economic loss. This sentiment can be attributed to the impact of historical memory, as will be discussed later.

Therefore, commercial liberalism is weak in explaining Sino-Japanese political relations during the Koizumi period. However, two caveats about the effect of economic interdependence are in order. First, much of the aforementioned China’s New Diplomacy was to develop tighter economic integration with its Asian neighbors. While the direct goal was primarily to enhance China’s own “power and plenty,” this diplomatic campaign also created a general atmosphere of common interest with these countries and mitigated their apprehension about and possible resistance to the rise of China. Additionally, China’s engagement in a web of regional economic interdependence was believed to have the function of constraining the military adventurism of China as a rising power.³¹

Even in Sino-Japanese relations, the exception in the overall successful New Diplomacy, the positive role of commercial links should not be completely rejected. A recent modification of the liberal school of IR theory suggests that whether economic interdependence will ensure peace depends on states’ expectations of future trade: long-term expectations of open trade will increase the value of continued peace for states, while the perceived danger of future trade severance will push states toward aggressive foreign policy.³² It is exactly because Sino-Japanese economic interaction showed no clear sign of decline despite the political troubles that Chinese and Japanese confidence in free, open bilateral trade in the foreseeable future remained robust. The expected value for continued commercial ties thus increased the value of continued peace in the eyes of their leaders. Without the strong commercial links and the belief in the future continuation of these links Sino-Japanese relations might have been worse, or they might even have had militarized disputes.

The Role of Realpolitik: Balance of Power, the Future Perspective and Threat Perception

During the Koizumi years Sino-Japanese political relations experienced a downward spiral, sparking a lively discussion about an intensifying rivalry between the two countries.³³ In an international rivalry the goals and interests of the two sides are largely incompatible while overlapping interests are rare; thus each side emphasizes relative gains and compromise in bilateral disputes becomes difficult.³⁴ A realist theory focusing on systemic distribution of power as the decisive factor driving states’ external

behaviors could find at least two fundamental structural reasons supporting the thesis of a Sino-Japanese rivalry.³⁵

One lies in the end of the Cold War and the accompanying shift in East Asian international alignment. While China and Japan jointly countered the Soviet threat during the 1970s–80s, such strategic solidarity faded away with the end of the superpowers' confrontation.³⁶ Now the traditional strategic interaction—balance of power between regional powers in a multipolar setting—resumed its dominance in East Asia.³⁷ To those who believe that multipolarity is intrinsically conflict-prone, this systemic transition from a bipolar to multipolar structure would destabilize East Asian international relations.³⁸ If this view is right, regional powers like China and Japan should engage in intense power struggle for dominance, as European powers did in modern history.³⁹ But it should be noted that other IR theorists have suggested that both bipolarity and multipolarity can be stable as well as unstable, depending to a large extent on unit-level factors.⁴⁰ For one thing, Europe today is also multipolar but much more peaceful than historically.

The second structural cause of Sino-Japanese rivalry has to do with the uneven growth of Chinese and Japanese economies. During the Koizumi years, China's GDP grew at a double-digit rate, but Japan's only slowly recovered from recession, reaching approximately 2 percent since 2003. Realists emphasize the destabilizing effect of shifting distribution of power on international relations. Thucydides claimed that the Peloponnesian War was fundamentally caused by "the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta."⁴¹ Gilpin, Organski, and Kugler also argue that changing power differentials tend to spark systemic conflict between the declining power and the rising power.⁴² While in the past the Chinese economy lagged far behind Japan, now China seems to have entered the same league as Japan. Following William Thompson, two states are strategic rivals if they see each other as "threatening competitors who are categorized as enemies."⁴³ The last time China and Japan reached roughly comparable levels of national power was in 1894, and a war erupted between the ascending Meiji Japan and declining Qing Empire. The same kind of power parity, if truly in existence today, could cause serious Sino-Japanese conflict once again.⁴⁴ Some realists see that Japan is already balancing the rise of China by consolidating security cooperation with the US.⁴⁵

However, several factors should mitigate the security impact of uneven Sino-Japanese economic growth, at least in the near future. First, the rise of China has fallen short of challenging the status quo in international power distribution or catching up with Japanese superiority in terms of both economic prowess and air and naval power (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows that despite the rapid growth of the Chinese economy in the last decade, Japan's GDP is still more than twice that of China. The fact that the Japanese economy began to recover during the Koizumi years made it even harder for China to rapidly close the gap. Besides this, because the Chinese population surged during this period, its per capita GDP continued to fall far behind that of Japan.⁴⁶

Chinese military spending has increased rapidly over the past decade, but the actual figure was a hotly debated topic largely due to the lack of transparency present on the Chinese side.⁴⁷ Likewise, neither is Japan's figure clearly defined as its calculation method, different from that of most Western countries, tends to downplay Japanese

TABLE 1
SINO-JAPANESE BALANCE OF POWER, 1995 AND 2005

	GDP (\$bn constant 2000)	Per Capita GDP(\$)	Defense Expenditure (\$bn)	Armed Forces (thousand)	Combat Aircraft	Principal Surface Combatants	Submarines	Nuclear Warheads
1995								
China	792	685	7.48 ^a	2,930	4,970	50	52	434 ^b
Japan	4,430	35,322	53.8	239	450	63	18	0
2005								
China	1,890	1,449	29.5 ^a	2,255	2,643	63	69	410
Japan	4,993	39,075	44.7	240	380	53	16	0

Economic data are from The World Bank, *World Development Indicators*; military power data, unless indicated otherwise, are from International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance* and "Strategic Asia by the Numbers," *Strategic Asia 2006-07*.

^aOfficial budget at market exchange rates.

^b1993 number from Robert S. Norris et al. *British, French, and Chinese Nuclear Weapons* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994).

defense expenditures. By using the Western method, Japan can be ranked as the third largest military spender, behind the US and Russia but still well ahead of China.⁴⁸

In terms of current military capabilities, China's strength lies mainly in its 2 million-strong ground forces, compared to Japan's compact army that is roughly one-tenth the size. But it is inconceivable that China and Japan would fight a land war in the foreseeable future, and what is more relevant to their defense against mutual threat is the balance of air and naval power. In this respect Japan enjoys a clear superiority, even without counting in the support of the American Seventh Fleet in the Pacific Ocean. The Japanese Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) has the strongest arsenal in the region, including about 200 F-15s, 50 F-2s, a variant of American F-16s jointly developed by Japan and the US, and 13 E-2C early warning aircraft.⁴⁹ In contrast, the huge force of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) is mainly made up of second- and third- generation aircraft, except for the 78 Su-27s and 76 Su-30 fighter-bombers purchased from Russia in the last decade.

Similarly, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has a high quantity but low quality. The pride of the fleet is two Russian *Sovremenny*-class guided missile destroyers (DDG), four Russian *Kilo*-class attack submarines, and a handful of domestically developed *Song*-class submarines. In recent years China has been trying to address the serious shortfall. In 2004 China launched a new diesel submarine, the *Yuan*-class. It also took two new *Sovremenny* DDGs from Russia by 2006, and is expecting to get the last two of eight additional *Kilo*-class submarines by late 2007.⁵⁰ Still, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) has the best submarines and largest destroyer force in the region, including six *Kongo*-class destroyers equipped with the state-of-the-art Aegis war fighting system. On top of this, its over 100 P-3C patrol and surveillance aircraft, another 100 advanced anti-submarine helicopters, and the world's largest mine fleet ensure that Japan is secure from the threats of submarine and mine warfare.⁵¹ Overall, Japanese MSDF continues to outclass China's "maturing but still adolescent navy."⁵²

China's missile forces are an exception to its overall backward military arsenal. The PLA now maintains 30 or more Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), 110 or more Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs), and about 700 Short-Range

Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs), which gives China a “full spectrum of offensive missile forces as well as a bona fide second-strike nuclear deterrent.”⁵³ Facing the potential missile threat from China and North Korea, Japan has sped up its missile defense cooperation with the US in recent years. It will deploy ground-based PAC-III interceptors and begin to arm its Aegis-equipped destroyers with Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) capabilities by 2007, and deploy sea-based Standard Missile 3 interceptors by 2008.⁵⁴ As for Japan’s security under the Chinese nuclear threat, the US–Japan alliance provides Japan with a safe nuclear umbrella, and Japan itself possesses all the expertise and materials to “go nuclear” should it decide to do so.

Indeed, mainstream Japanese policymakers and strategic analysts have not seen China as an immediate military threat. Koizumi explicitly spoke of China’s rise as not a threat but an opportunity for Japan.⁵⁵ Japanese official documents released during the Koizumi years, including the Araki Report by an advisory panel to Koizumi, the new defense guideline, and annual defense white paper all called on the government to closely monitor the trend of Chinese military buildup to evaluate “whether it exceeds the level necessary for national defense,” but none of them directly labeled China as a threat.⁵⁶ The well-regarded annual review published by Japan’s Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), *Asian Security*, pointed out in 2004, “given China’s GDP is only ¼ of that of Japan, the gap in our military powers is huge. Even though China’s launching of a manned spacecraft in October 2003 greatly boosted its prestige, it has not suddenly changed Japan–China balance of power.”⁵⁷ Even ardent advocates of the “China threat” noted the PLA’s lack of power projection capability, poor quality of weapons and low comprehensive combat potential as its ostensible weakness.⁵⁸ In fact, during 2002–06 the Japanese defense budget decreased annually in absolute yen value, showing that the government felt no urgent need to respond to any external threat.⁵⁹

Second, Sino-Japanese strategic rivalry was not preordained by conflicting interests as they also had many shared goals. Their economies were not only highly interdependent but also mutually complementary.⁶⁰ They had shared interest in de-nuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. Additionally, there was considerable room for bilateral cooperation on various global issues “ranging from energy security, environmental protection, climate change, prevention and control of diseases to counter-terrorism, combating transnational crimes and the prevention of proliferation of weapons of massive destruction.”⁶¹

Moreover, none of the issues of bilateral contention involved their vital strategic interests. On the Taiwan problem, after the PRC took over the ROC’s UN seat and the US withdrew troops from Taiwan and pledged the “One China” policy in the 1970s, Taiwan ceased to be a matter of international legitimacy or national survival for Beijing. At stake instead was China’s national identity and pride because it treated the recovery of such “lost territories” as Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan from old “imperialist powers” as a symbol of national rejuvenation. The government would face a legitimacy crisis if it showed any signs of compromise in sovereignty disputes over Taiwan. Beijing fiercely protested Japan’s alleged interference in the Taiwan issue whenever it saw increased Japanese political contacts with or the application of the US–Japan security treaty to Taiwan. But Tokyo, alarmed by the 1995–96 Taiwan Strait crisis and China’s military buildup in the coastal area facing Taiwan, frequently voiced the concern that

Beijing might use force against Taiwan. Since China lacked the military capability to conquer Taiwan in the short term and tip the balance of power in West Pacific,⁶² what threatened Japan more was the long-term prospect that China might eventually unify Taiwan when its power was sufficiently strong, and/or the violent escalation of a cross-strait crisis that would destabilize the region and damage Japan's maritime interest. While Beijing and Tokyo held quite different long-term perspectives over Taiwan, in the short term their interests actually converged because they both wished to prevent military conflict in Taiwan Strait to maintain sea-lane safety on the Pacific Rim that would ensure the free flow of resources and overseas market access.

Besides the Taiwan controversy, in both 1990 and 1996 major crises between China and Japan erupted over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the ECS. During the Koizumi years, the non-governmental *baodiao* (defending Diaoyu) campaign thrived in China, repeatedly causing diplomatic friction with Japan.⁶³ Meanwhile, bilateral disputes over EEZ rights in the ECS intensified as China insisted on the principle of continental shelf boundaries while Japan used the midpoint to delimit their EEZ boundary. Particularly, the two governments locked horns from 2004 over the natural gas field of Chunxiao on the Chinese side of the median line. China felt it had every right to explore resources within its own EEZ, but Japan worried that China might tap Japanese natural resources because the field extends into Japan's EEZ.⁶⁴

However, the disputed offshore islands are merely barren and windswept rocks that lack significant strategic or economic significance. Gaining a foothold in the ECS could be important should China seek to dominate maritime Asia and ultimately defy the US hegemon. However, at least in the short term China, lacking power projection capabilities and sophisticated naval warfare weapons and doctrines, will be unable to challenge the formidable US military presence in the Asia-Pacific and Japan's naval superiority. As for the economic value, the estimates of oil and gas reserves in the ECS are greatly disputed and largely "speculative."⁶⁵ The much disputed Chunxiao gas field was estimated to have 36.9 million tons of crude oil, only equivalent to Japan's natural gas consumption for one month.⁶⁶ In September 2004, Unocal and Royal Dutch/Shell pulled out of the project for "commercial reasons," reflecting the lack of confidence in the profitability of the gas field by international oil majors.⁶⁷ One may contend that even though the ECS has limited proven resources, it could still meet China's immediate energy needs, particularly in large population centers and industrial bases on the East coast such as Shanghai. But in fact the natural gas shortage in Chinese coastal cities was not a problem of energy security, and the ECS gas could not provide a steady supply to relieve the shortage.⁶⁸

Therefore, if narrowly focusing on a static distribution of power, a realist explanation will have trouble making a determinate prediction about Sino-Japanese political relations. In fact, realists themselves admit that "in the short run, the relative distribution of power is often uncertain and leaders often face ambiguous and contradictory information,"⁶⁹ and "current circumstances are less important than emerging trends."⁷⁰ So how states behave internationally is shaped by not just the present balance of power but also long-term projection of the external security environment, especially regarding the sources and potency of the potential threat. If factoring in the perception of each other's future capabilities and intent, a more sophisticated realist argument may better

explain the recent deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations than a materialist, near-term focused approach.⁷¹

In terms of future capabilities, both Gilpin's and Oranski and Kugler's theories actually suggest that states tend to take action in anticipation of a future power shift rather than wait until the shift actually occurs. So one can argue that even though the Sino-Japanese balance of power has remained largely unchanged, provided that their uneven economic growth will remain, Japanese leaders may fear a potential Chinese hegemon and decide to balance against China now, not later. Conversely, if China's economic growth stagnates, Japan will continue to enjoy security confidence and feel no immediate pressure to rival China. During the Koizumi years alarmist remarks about a China threat were often heard in Japanese policy circles, such as those by Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) leader Maehara Seiji and Foreign Minister Asō Tarō on separate occasions in December 2005, and ASDF General Takiwaki Hiroyuki in February 2006.⁷² This "China threat thesis" was precisely based on the fear of China's potential to become a regional hegemon in the future rather than on its current military capability.⁷³

Additionally, how the future Sino-Japanese balance of power may shift will also cause different dynamics in the US–China–Japan relations triangle: the US may organize an encirclement of China in Asia should Chinese power grow rapidly, which would reinforce the Sino-Japanese rivalry; but if the Chinese economy slows down, the US may pull back from the region and Japan may develop independent military capabilities, including nuclear weapons, which may trigger a nervous response from China.⁷⁴

Aside from capabilities, two countries can pose a potential threat to one another if their intents are viewed as threatening. As Stephen Walt says, even states with modest capabilities can be seen as a threat if they are perceived to have aggressive intentions.⁷⁵ However, to determine other states' long-term intent is a challenging task. Without precise, objective information, policymakers frequently rely on subjective factors to make future estimates of the external environment. In his seminal work on threat perception, Klaus Knorr claims that "a threat is usually not observable. It is a cognitive construct."⁷⁶

Two broadly defined factors can inform the intention-based threat perception. One is a state's current conduct, which may reveal aggressive intentions. Walt argues that Libya's confrontational policy to the West caused major powers and neighboring countries to coordinate their actions to counterbalance its threat, and the expansionist behaviors of pre-World War I Germany alarmed British leaders, who decided to respond to the German threat with arms buildup.

In the same vein, Chinese and Japanese assertiveness in international military affairs can signal hostile intentions to others. Actually, Japanese and Chinese strategic assessments show considerable concern regarding each other's desire for military expansionism as judged from their current policies. The Japanese annual defense white paper has since 1999 continuously pointed to the unauthorized operations of Chinese oceanic research vessels and even naval ships in its surrounding waters as one of the major destabilizing factors in Japan's security environment. Particularly, a *Han*-class Chinese nuclear-powered submarine passed Japanese territorial waters submerged in November 2004, prompting an unusually high level of alert by the Japanese MSDF.⁷⁷ Speculations regarding China's motives abounded in Japanese media and among

Japanese defense specialists, ranging from the desire to keep Japan in check amid the bilateral dispute in the ECS, to display a “military presence” in the area as well as to test Japan’s anti-submarine warfare capabilities and government response, and to prepare for an armed confrontation with US forces during a possible Taiwan crisis.⁷⁸

As for the Chinese strategic perception of Japan, the defense white papers stressed Japan’s missile defense, its overseas military activities, and its attempt to exercise collective security through constitutional revision, as the complicated security factors in the region.⁷⁹ Particularly after the eruption of the War on Terror, Japan enacted the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law authorizing the deployment of the SDF troops to the conflict-ridden Iraq, and the Japanese Diet passed three emergency bills to strengthen the defense establishment in case of external military attack. Japan also became less hesitant to weigh in on regional security issues, such as those regarding North Korea and Taiwan. In February 2005, Japan and the US issued a joint declaration not only condemning North Korea’s nuclear weapons program but also stating “the peaceful resolution” of the Taiwan issue was a common strategic objective. In the eyes of Chinese strategic analysts, these moves marked a major departure from Japan’s low-key attitude to international military affairs in the past, signaling an “all-out transformation” (*quanmian zhuanxing*) in Japan’s military doctrine from exclusive defense towards a more “outwardly directed posture” (*waixiang xing*).⁸⁰ Some even claimed that Japan’s SDF was changing from a force of “territorial defense” (*bentu fangwei xing*) into “regional intervention” (*diqu ganyu xing*), with the ability for “preemptive strike” (*xianfa zhiren*).⁸¹

To be sure, judging a state’s intention from its current conduct can cause serious misperception. A state can camouflage its aggressive actions to deliberately deceive its adversaries. And when a state’s actions do exhibit assertiveness, they could be out of defensive rather than offensive purposes. In the case of China, it engaged in active military buildup because of the concern that its outdated arsenal was insufficient to defend its large land mass, to counter the danger of Taiwanese independence given American military support to Taiwan, or to meet the new security challenges surrounding the country since the American-led War on Terror began.⁸² Yet China’s military modernization and increased operations in its coastal waters can be easily seen as an indication of its aggressive intention. Similarly, Japan strengthened its alliance with the US and provided active support for its anti-terrorism war in part to hedge against China, a rising power whose intention is uncertain, and in part to reduce the risk of abandonment as Japan relied on America for its nuclear deterrence. But the US–Japan alliance has a paradoxical implication for China: the alliance is seen as benign if it serves as a “cork in the bottle” of Japanese militarism, or even in the bottle of US policy,⁸³ but would appear provocative if it takes on an interventionist posture in Asia. Especially as since the late 1990s the alliance has become more assertive about ensuring Taiwanese security and accelerated missile defense cooperation, which China suspects would be used to defend Taiwan or neutralize the Chinese nuclear deterrence. Thus the strengthening of the US–Japan alliance, if it exceeds a certain limit, could spark deep Chinese suspicion and generate a Sino-Japanese security dilemma.⁸⁴

The second non-capability factor indicating states’ future intention is the preexisting belief systems, cognitive schemas, and even emotional biases of leaders.⁸⁵ A schema precedes and conditions the formation of people’s perception of the

external world, keeping them from revising the schema with the help of discrepant information, thus diminishing their ability to learn from the environment.⁸⁶ Cognitive schemas built on recent, memorable, or easily imagined events are particularly easy to be retrieved to “match” new situations.⁸⁷ Recognizing the role of ideas and emotions in foreign policymaking is not to say that power does not matter. Thomas Berger says East Asian nations are indeed sensitive to military balance and external threats, but their perception of and response to these structural, material forces are often conditioned by cultural-ideational factors, including the “deep-rooted historically based suspicions and animosities, frustrated nationalism, and distinct conceptions of national identity and their differing understanding of the national mission in international affairs.”⁸⁸

Of particular relevance to the cognitive schema in Sino-Japanese relations is undoubtedly the history of their traumatic war during the 1930s–40s; recent works suggest the legacy of the war history has cast a shadow over their relations.⁸⁹ From a fine-tuned realist perspective, the troubled political relationship between the two countries in the Koizumi years would be explicable if historical memory indeed worsened their mutual threat perception so as to harden their policies toward one another. This is what the next section considers.

The Perceptual and Emotional Impact of Divergent Memories

National Myths, Divergent Memories, and the Mechanisms of Emotion and Intention

The existing studies acknowledge the negative legacy of war history in shaping Sino-Japanese relations, but are vague on how this effect actually occurs. I develop an analytical framework to capture the rather elusive causal impact of historical memory on foreign policy. It adopts the assumption of social memory study that memory is an image of the past collectively constructed by a social group in the present.⁹⁰ While different social groups form different memories of the past, ruling elites tend to create self-glorifying, self-whitewashing and other-maligning national myths for instrumental purposes.⁹¹ Once institutionalized as the hegemonic national memory through school textbooks and other propaganda tools, national myths would cause divergent historical interpretations between former enemy countries regarding not just what happened in past traumatic conflict, but also the nature and scope of responsibility for the conflict.⁹²

Two causal mechanisms link divergent memories to foreign policy: *emotion* and *intention*. In terms of *emotion*, the victim country, embracing myths of victimization and self-righteousness, will feel deep *grievances* about its enormous sufferings in the past, which can translate into a strong sense of entitlement vis-à-vis the perpetrator. In addition, other-maligning myths held by the victim stimulate the emotion of *contempt* for the perpetrator country, especially if that country denies its historical responsibility, which may be condemned as morally despicable. As for the perpetrator country, its self-glorifying and self-whitewashing myths will lead to a lack of sympathy for the victim and a failure to understand its animosity and bitterness. Dismissing the victim’s emotions as unreasonable and self-indulgent, the people of the perpetrator country will develop emotions of *disgust* and *frustration* because they are

constantly reminded of the disgraceful past that they wish to forget, and they blame the national shame (not guilt) not on their past crimes but the victim's obsession with the past.

Conflict over historical interpretation can also worsen mutual perception of *intention*. The victim country tends to link the unrepentant attitude of the perpetrator to its evil intention, and thus worry about any remaining or reviving aggressive ambitions from the perpetrator. Meanwhile, the perpetrator country finds the sense of entitlement of the victim state unjustified and only used as a disguise for its hostile intentions. A victim country's quest for national greatness in the name of redeeming itself from past suffering and humiliation will especially stimulate fear of revanchist menace on the perpetrator side.

The mechanisms of *emotion* and *intention* can influence foreign policy by changing public opinion and elite perception so as to set the foreign policy agenda, limit policy options, and constrain policy implementation. Two general predictions can be inferred regarding the distinct reactions of the *public* and *elites* to these two mechanisms. In this article I define "elites" as national leaders and high-ranking government officials directly involved in policymaking, as well as foreign and military policy specialists playing the advisory role for the government.

Prediction 1: Negative emotions and perceived intentions motivate public pressure on the government to adopt hard-line policies on specific bilateral issues.

Herbert Kelman argues from a social psychological point of view that the "collective moods" of public opinion centering on traumatic memories can figure prominently in national consciousness so as to produce "powerful social norms." Leaders are compelled to keep their policy in line with the prevailing norms, even if these norms have origins in their own mythmaking practices, often "choosing hostile actions over conciliatory ones."⁹³ So a circular relationship exists between elites and public opinion: elite mythmaking shapes negative public opinion, but public opinion can later constrain the leaders when they consider policy change.

How exactly does a negative public mood influence specific policy issues? Risse-Kappen argues that the public can "affect the choices of top decision makers by changing policy goals or how those goals are prioritized, or by narrowing the range of options and/or means to implement goals," or "influence the coalition-building processes among the elites."⁹⁴ Particularly if the attentive segment of the public, sometimes called sub-elites, advocates a confrontational stance, they are more likely to constrain government policy on specific bilateral issues than the mass public, who are less informed and interested regarding the targeted issue areas.

To prove this prediction, one needs to show evidence that the negative public opinion can 1) directly constrain elite policy deliberation to favor hard-line options, or 2) strengthen the hands of hard-line elites over moderate ones, thus indirectly influencing government decision-making. And this prediction requires a *corollary*, which is that public opinion data should show a significant downturn in mutual feelings of affection/closeness and trust and, more importantly, the main sources of the downturn are the negative emotions and perception of hostile intentions derived from bilateral memory conflict.

Prediction 2: Negative perception of intentions, but not necessarily emotions, heightens elite threat perception, relative gains concerns, and willingness to risk conflict regarding another country.

Due to the “blowback” phenomenon, elites may also believe national myths if previously generated myths are internalized, regardless of the original instrumental purposes of such mythmaking.⁹⁵ However unlike the public, evidence could be lacking to demonstrate the effect of *emotion* on elites, especially in published sources or professional interlocations, since their occupation values sober, rational reasoning. But elites should feel less restrained from expressing realpolitik concerns about relative gains and potential mutual threat, and these concerns should stem from not just rational assessment of international power distribution but also the mechanism of *intention* as a result of conflicting historical interpretations.

War Myths and Sino-Japanese History Disputes

Elsewhere I have argued that both Japanese and Chinese ruling elites purveyed national myths about their war history in the 1930s–40s.⁹⁶ Postwar Japanese conservative elites instilled three myths in national war memory. First, the “myth of the military clique” blamed a small group of military leaders for launching the war and asserted that the Japanese people were peace-loving, innocent victims of the war. This myth whitewashed the complicity of a wide range of wartime political actors, including the emperor and court officials, *zaibatsu*, civilian politicians, and high-ranking bureaucrats. It also ignored the enthusiastic support that numerous ordinary Japanese had given to the war policy. Second, the Western-centric myth held Japan responsible for opening hostilities against the Western Allies but evaded its aggression and atrocities in Asia. Third, the “heroic sacrifice” myth gave imperial soldiers special honor for having sacrificed themselves for the nation. By extolling the military’s image, conservative historiography circumvented the fundamental mistakes in the war policy and the horrendous atrocities committed by the military rank and file.

National myths also permeated Chinese war memory. In the first two postwar decades, China’s official war history played down Japanese war atrocities and drew a distinction between the majority of innocent Japanese and a handful of militarists. However, since the early 1980s, Deng Xiaoping and his successors tried to foster an assertive nationalist ideology in order to enhance regime legitimacy, mobilize public support for economic reform, and appease conservative hardliners critical of the reform agenda. Through a nationwide patriotic education campaign, Beijing promoted a national history centered on the conflict between the Chinese nation and foreign nations that had invaded China in the past, especially Japan. While reversing the previous cover-up of Japanese atrocities, the new narrative went to the other extreme to arouse Chinese victimhood and demonize Japan.

Because of their divergent understandings of the war history, China blamed Japan for failing to come to terms with its past, and constantly demanded Japanese contrition. Yet Japan believed its wartime actions were not particularly sinister, and Japan had settled its war legacy through bilateral diplomatic treaties and numerous official apologies, albeit largely ambiguous and limited. Many in Japan fiercely rejected China’s history bashing of Japan as interference with its internal affairs.

Consequently, the two countries stumbled into one historical quarrel after another, including repeated controversies over Japanese history textbooks, Yasukuni incidents, and Japanese compensation to Chinese war victims. Recently, the Japanese government even lodged its own protest against the anti-Japanese theme in Chinese history textbooks, escalating the history disputes into more acrimonious finger-pointing.⁹⁷

To test the two predictions of the argument of divergent memories, I examine public and elite thinking in the two countries based on interviews, opinion surveys, parliamentary minutes, media data and official documents, and published foreign and security policy analyses. Evidence suggests that during the Koizumi era the negative emotions and perception of intentions derived from historiographic conflict worsened the overall public image in each country, and such negative public opinion are capable of constraining elite policy options. Elites show less emotional impulse than the public, but their mutual threat perception, concerns about relative gains and preferences for tough policy options were heightened by divergent memories.

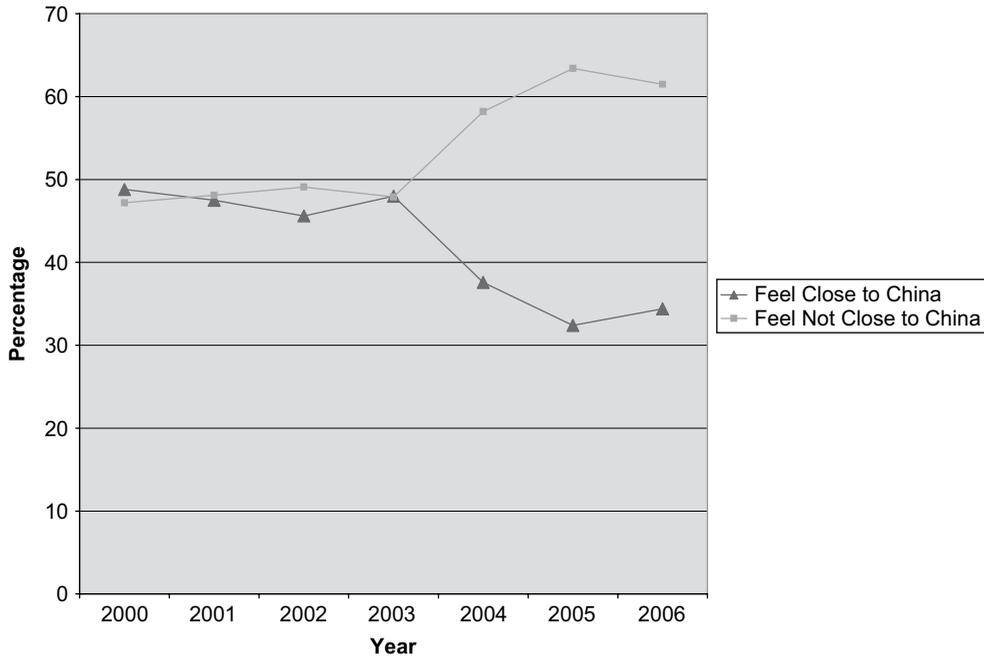
Testing Prediction 1: Chinese and Japanese Climate of Opinion and Its Constraints on Policy

While regular opinion data are lacking in China, sporadic polls confirm that the general public mood increasingly turned against Japan during the Koizumi years. According to the surveys by the Institute of Japanese Studies (IJS) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), in 2002 only 5.9 percent of Chinese respondents felt close to Japan while 43.3 percent felt “not close,” and in 2004 those feeling “not close” rose rapidly to 53.6 percent.⁹⁸ Another poll jointly conducted in China and Japan in 2005 shows that most Chinese respondents thought bilateral relations were “not good,” and overwhelmingly blamed Japan for bilateral tension.⁹⁹

Japanese public opinion about China conforms to this pattern. According to the Cabinet Office’s annual Public Poll on Diplomacy (Figure 2), during the Koizumi administration those who felt “not close” to China surpassed those who felt “close,” and the gap between the two widened sharply in 2004–05. Additionally, in 2001 China replaced South Korea as the third least favorite country of the Japanese public (Figure 3).

Further, bilateral memory divergence was directly responsible for this negative change in Chinese and Japanese public mood. The memory gap is manifest in joint polls conducted by *Asahi Shimbun* and the Chinese People’s University in 1997 and 2002. In 1997, majorities of both the Japanese (58 percent) and Chinese (86 percent) public considered Japan’s war compensation to China inadequate. However, when asked what the Japanese government should do regarding history 74 percent of Chinese respondents, compared to only 35 percent of the Japanese, picked contrition choices including “heartfelt apology,” “monetary compensation,” or “enhancing history education,” while only 20 percent of the Chinese and 61 percent of the Japanese chose “constructing a new cooperative relationship unconstrained by the past.” Five years later, still 87 percent of the Chinese but only 44 percent of the Japanese respondents agreed that Japanese compensation was insufficient. Regarding government policy, Chinese respondents demanding Japanese contrition increased to 85 percent, while those Japanese advocating new cooperation increased to 67 percent.¹⁰⁰

FIGURE 2
JAPANESE POPULAR FEELINGS OF CLOSENESS TO CHINA, 2000–2006.

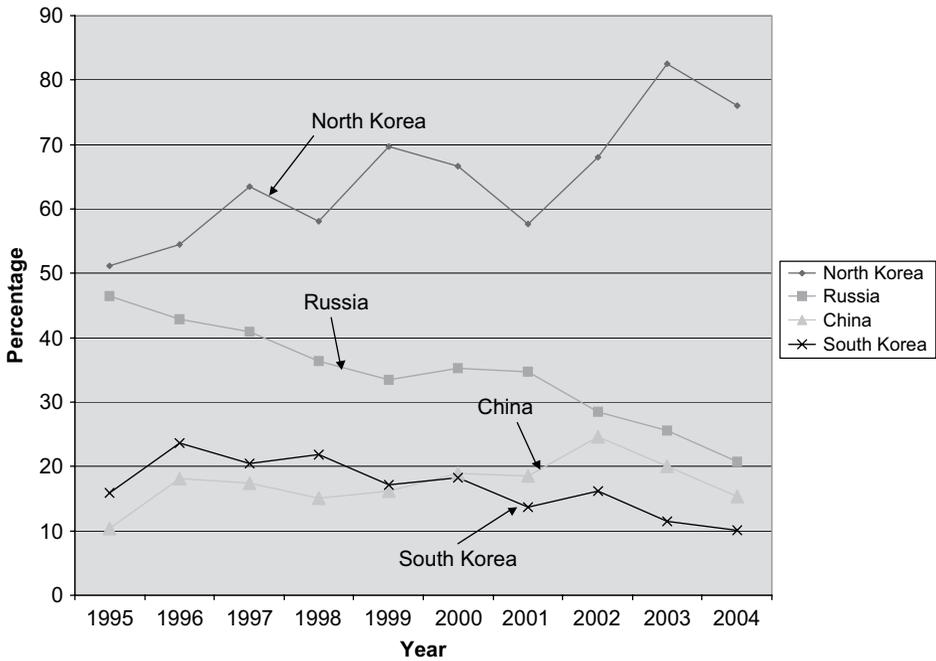


Source: Office of Japanese Cabinet homepage on public polls. Available at <http://www8.cao.go.jp>.

The increasingly conflictual Chinese and Japanese war memories elicited strong mutual antipathy in public sentiment. In China, polls clearly demonstrated public emotions of historical grievances toward Japan. According to the same poll by the IJS in 2004, when asked why they did not feel close to Japan, the most selected reason (61.7 percent) was “Japan has not done real self-reflection on its history of aggression against China,” and the second most selected reason (26 percent) was “Japan invaded China in modern history,” but only 6.9 percent of respondents said “because Japan formed a military alliance with the US and poses a security threat to China.” This poll also suggests that the perceived lack of historical contrition considerably fueled Chinese public perceptions of a Japanese threat, for they believed an unrepentant Japan would become aggressive again. Therefore, they were sensitive to Japanese military and diplomatic activism. In a separate question in the IJS poll, 54.8 percent of Chinese respondents worried about Japan embarking on a militarist path again, compared with 30.9 percent who felt the opposite. As a result, 57 percent of respondents opposed Japan’s permanent membership in the UN Security Council, while only 11.8 percent gave support or conditional support; additionally, more respondents believed Japan should act as an economic (49 percent) or peaceful power (38.6 percent), rather than a military (8 percent) or political (8.2 percent) power, in international and regional affairs.

In contrast, the Japanese people remembered the war as a miserable experience for the nation itself, while largely filtering out the memory of Japan’s wrongdoings

FIGURE 3
JAPANESE PUBLIC'S THREE LEAST FAVORITE COUNTRIES, 1995–2004.



Source: Jiji Monthly Public Polls, in Japan Naikaku Soru Daijin Kanbō Kōhōshitsu, *Yoron Chōsa Nenkan* [Opinion Polls Yearbook]. Data used are polls conducted every May.

regarding other Asian peoples.¹⁰¹ Further, while many felt sorry for Japan's wartime actions, the majority of the Japanese public rejected the Chinese argument that more Japanese contrition was the key to constructing bilateral friendship today. As the Chinese protested the lack of Japanese contrition with increasing bitterness, the Japanese were fed up with the seemingly endless pressure. Allen Whiting observes an "action–reaction syndrome" in the decline of favorable Japanese attitudes to China in 1985–86 in response to both Beijing's Japan-bashing campaign and Chinese student demonstrations against Japan.¹⁰² This pattern reappeared after anti-Japanese demonstrations broke out in China in 2005. Lacking empathy with the Chinese people's grievances that had sparked the demonstrations, many Japanese found China an unreasonable or even "scary" country.¹⁰³ Reacting to widespread animosity in China, the public mood in Japan was at best described as "chilled," helping to explain the sharp decline of their feelings of affinity towards China.

The memory-derived negative emotions and perception of hostile intentions turned the Chinese and Japanese "climate of opinion" so much against each other that in recent years they gave rise to strong public preferences for hard-line policy options on specific issues of bilateral disputes.

Much of the power of Chinese public opinion came from the considerable opening up of Chinese society in the past decade. Since the 1990s a considerable segment of

Chinese urbanites have begun to follow international news closely and participate in policy debates, especially on internet bulletin board systems (BBS). Regarding the Sino-Japanese EEZ disputes, for example, after Tokyo granted test-drilling rights to Teikoku Oil in the disputed sea area in July 2005, Chinese online chat-rooms were filled with anti-Japanese messages. Some even accused this act of “the new manifestation of Japan’s expansionist and aggressive consciousness in WWII.”¹⁰⁴ One message claimed “not a single drop of oil can be conceded to Japan! This is the principle of national interest . . . Hope some leaders will not do stupid things . . . Please change earlier policies on behalf of national interest and shout to Japan: ‘No!’ . . .”¹⁰⁵ To be fair, these radical “patriots” did not represent the entire Chinese population. The fact that they were far more vocal than moderate citizens helped them set the tone for policy debate on the internet, the most open and dynamic public realm of discourse in China, and made them a particularly powerful constituency supporting anti-Japanese policies under the authoritarian Chinese regime.

Not only resigned to expressing their feelings in the non-propaganda mass media, in recent years China’s “attentive public” has actively pushed for confrontation with Japan through two forms of policy advocacy: internet signature campaigns and mass demonstrations. In 2003, for example, tens of thousands of Chinese “netizens” joined a petition to oppose the choice of Japanese Shinkansen technology for the Beijing–Shanghai high-speed rail link because of Japan’s denial of war guilt. In another large-scale campaign from late March 2005, tens of millions of Chinese around the world signed internet petitions to oppose Japan’s bid for permanent membership on the UN Security Council, again citing the history of World War II as the basis of opposition.¹⁰⁶ This campaign also triggered the largest anti-Japanese demonstrations seen in China since the mid-1980s.

To what extent were Chinese policymakers constrained by such hawkish public opinion toward Japan? Students of Chinese public opinion believe its power has increased significantly over the past decade.¹⁰⁷ One sign of this is the growing attention that Chinese policymakers are paying to public opinion on foreign affairs, presumably to avoid going against the general tide of public sentiment. Government agencies now run BBS on the internet to directly observe and moderate public policy debates. The “Strong Nation Forum” (*Qiangguo Luntan*) run by the People’s Daily, the mouthpiece of party propaganda, and the “China Diplomacy Forum” (*Zhongguo Waijiao Luntan*) run by the Foreign Ministry frequently invite government officials as well as foreign affairs scholars and analysts to exchange views with netizens. In these discussions netizens have raised questions on such sensitive issues as the Yasukuni Shrine, island disputes, and the ECS conflict, and then explicitly demanded that the Chinese government make no concession to Japan.¹⁰⁸ After the anti-Japanese demonstrations of April 2005 Beijing assembled a number of foreign affairs experts, including the moderate former diplomat Wu Jianmin, to give a series of lectures at universities in order to guide the “patriotic enthusiasm” of young students.¹⁰⁹ A Foreign Ministry official claimed government policy must follow national interest rather than public opinion; yet he also admitted public opinion needed guidance lest it “disturb our work.”¹¹⁰ This indicates that Chinese policymakers indeed felt public pressure when making decisions.

While the Chinese government may not follow popular demands in a straightforward way, the overall anti-Japanese public mood can promote hard-line elites while serving to isolate or weaken the domestic position of the moderates, and therefore indirectly sway government policy. During 2000–02 high-ranking officials like Premier Zhu Rongji and Zeng Qinghong emphasized bilateral friendship and downplayed the history issue in diplomatic settings. The foreign media saw these gestures as signs of a “New Thinking,” meaning that Beijing might be willing to transcend the history burden when dealing with Japan. But Chinese internet chat rooms fiercely attacked Zhu for “accommodating the Japanese too much.”¹¹¹ The Chinese Foreign Ministry also received complaints from the public calling Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan “a traitor who gives way to Japan.”¹¹²

When the fourth-generation leader Hu Jintao took power in 2002, he and the Foreign Ministry were eager to seek a breakthrough in Sino-Japanese relations. But their plan was soon stranded due to the rejection of “New Thinking” in both popular and elite debates during 2002–03.¹¹³ Vowing to “keep intimate with the people” and construct a “harmonious society,” Hu and Premier Wen Jiabao openly committed to listening to public voices when making policies. Careful observers of Chinese politics argue Hu and Wen’s pro-people gesture was mainly aimed at preventing major social crises in China, but it also meant that they could not defy the prevailing public opinion. They certainly drew lessons from the “mistake” of Hu Yaobang, the pro-Japan party general secretary of the 1980s, who was forced to step down in part because anti-Japanese student demonstrations had weakened his power.¹¹⁴ Additionally, during his first few years in office Hu Jintao needed support from Jiang to consolidate power, forcing him to uphold his predecessor’s policy lines, including the explicit linkage between the halting of visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and the resumption of state visits.¹¹⁵ Therefore the new Chinese leaders were compelled by the pressure of public opinion and factional politics to toughen their attitude towards Koizumi.

As the Chinese policymaking process is opaque, it is hard to gauge precisely how much public pressure directly translated into specific policy changes. But this author’s interviews with Chinese elites in May 2006 reveal that public opinion indeed hindered open-minded policy debates and limited policy options towards Japan. On the ECS dispute, for example, Chinese international analysts were split regarding how China should handle the issue: some advocated no concessions on any Chinese national interest, while others emphasized that joint exploration would benefit both sides. Aside from this, almost everyone interviewed felt the government could not really challenge the predominantly hawkish public opinion to make substantial compromise. Some explicitly drew an analogy between the ECS and Taiwan issues, both a matter of territorial sovereignty and national dignity, on which concession was ruled out. In addition, the majority of interviewees expressed caution about what they could say in public regarding policy towards Japan lest they personally become targets of popular nationalism. This indicates that a certain degree of “public censorship” existed in China, setting limits for elite policy debates on Japan. This does not mean that the government could not take ad hoc measures to temporarily de-escalate a dispute in order to avert a serious crisis; however, concerns about public opposition still effectively precluded bold government efforts toward cooperation.

Similarly, the Japanese public increasingly objected to conciliatory measures towards China as their feeling of closeness and trust towards China waned. In early April 2005 Mombushō approved a contentious history book that was criticized for whitewashing Japan's wartime aggression and its claim that the Senkaku and Takeshima (also claimed by South Korea) Islands belonged to Japan. While the textbook, on top of Koizumi's Yasukuni visits, spurred anti-Japanese demonstrations in China, polls showed that most Japanese people (57 percent) supported the textbook's description of the islands.¹¹⁶ The aforementioned poll of Japan Junior Chamber members also showed that even those interested in promoting Sino-Japanese friendship and business links often wanted the government to say no to China. Additionally, since the end of the 1990s the mass media in Japan has shown a largely unfavorable attitude toward China.¹¹⁷ Major newspaper *Sankei Shimbun* is known for being negative about China, while *Yomiuri Shimbun* and even the traditionally left-leaning *Asahi Shimbun* are more critical of China than before.¹¹⁸

How much then did Japanese public policy preferences translate into foreign policy constraints? Students of Japanese policymaking traditionally emphasize an elitist model and dismiss the role of public opinion.¹¹⁹ Especially over foreign policymaking, public opinion lacks direct influence because foreign affairs are rarely important campaign issues in Japanese elections. Nevertheless, studies show that the democratically elected government in Japan is generally unwilling to defy public opinion when making policies. John Emmerson says, "the voice of public opinion being louder in Japan than in most democracies, the Japanese leadership was never insensitive to the effect on the public of its decisions and actions."¹²⁰ Besides the pressure for political accountability, a strong cultural norm of consensus-building in Japan also encourages the government to accommodate various views rather than to practice a "tyranny of the majority."¹²¹ Paul Midford suggests that the consensus norms actually "enhance the role of public opinion, especially the views of vocal minorities and their representatives in the Diet."¹²²

The effect of public opinion tends to be greater in a more competitive political environment and over sensitive policy issues. With the reform of the electoral system and increased electoral competition from the mid-1990s, members of the Diet (whose political status was determined by election) became more cautious when handling foreign policy issues that received a high level of attention in the press and among the citizenry, such as the island and ECS disputes and Official Development Aid (ODA) policy. They even held direct policy dialogues with the electorate to ensure their policy advocacy would reflect the public's views. Japanese Diet debates are a relatively transparent channel through which the public, especially those attentive to political issues, can directly advocate policy and scrutinize policy implementation.¹²³ In addition, the enhanced policymaking capability of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) *gaikō-zoku* (diplomacy tribe) and their members' close connection with the Gaimushō officials also enabled parliamentarians to influence foreign policymaking.¹²⁴

Another way in which public opinion constrains Japanese foreign policy is, similar to the China case, by affecting elite politics. In Japan, the opinions of strong majorities can bolster certain popular leaders while weakening others who lose public favor.¹²⁵ Prime Minister Koizumi was one of the most popular leaders in the nation's postwar

history. The Japanese public's love for him was based less on his policy performance than on his reformist orientation, decisive personality, and determination to resist foreign pressure.¹²⁶ His insistence on visiting Yasukuni annually was a tactic of both electoral strategy and populist politics; having never before been to the Shrine, Koizumi promised *Nihon Izokukai* on the eve of the LDP presidential race in 2001 to pay annual visits after entering office, thus gaining the support of this powerful political group.¹²⁷ Though strongly protested by Asian governments and criticized domestically, even by other conservative politicians, including former prime ministers Nakasone and Hashimoto, his Yasukuni visits won him considerable public admiration.¹²⁸

During the Koizumi era, other hawkish Japanese leaders, such as Abe Shinzo, also enjoyed high popularity. Abe had been known for his tough position on North Korea when appointed Koizumi's Chief Cabinet Secretary in 2005. He was also one of the most vocal supporters of Koizumi's controversial shrine visits.¹²⁹ Abe's hard-line image won him a clear advantage over his more experienced but moderate rival, Fukuda Yasuo, during the LDP presidential race in September 2006. Another hawk in the Koizumi government was Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) minister Nakagawa Shōichi. Also a hard-core nationalist and close aide to Abe, Nakagawa favored a confrontational position vis-à-vis China and played a major role in stirring up the ECS disputes, which will be discussed further below.

By the time these hard-line leaders ascended to power, the older generation of pro-China politicians like Nonaka Hiromu had faded out of the scene. The moderate "China School" within the Gaimushō also suffered a clear decline of power.¹³⁰ Plus the overall negative tone of public opinion and media reporting about China, in recent years pro-Chinese voices in academia, press, and policy circles were muted. So when sensitive bilateral disputes erupt, the media highlighting and hard-liners' open bashing of China's "misconduct" could quickly incite Japanese public sentiment against China, and the public pressure in turn would empower the hard-liners to push for a confrontational policy.

This interactive process between the leaders, public and press can be illustrated by the case of the ECS disputes. The incident started at the end of May 2004 when Japanese media reported that China had started the construction at the Chunxiao gas field. Soon major Japanese newspapers were flooded with criticisms of not only China for violating Japan's interests but also of the government for lack of fast, resolute action.¹³¹ The Japanese government scrambled to establish an inter-agency committee under the prime minister to deal with the matter, and on June 21 Foreign Minister Kawaguchi Yoriko asked her Chinese counterpart Li Zhaoxing for data on Chinese gas exploration. While Gaimushō agreed to review Li's proposal about joint development in ECS and promised to "keep in touch with each other through the diplomatic channel," METI minister Nakagawa's intervention at this point precluded cool-headed diplomacy and quickened escalation.¹³² On June 23 Nakagawa boarded a Japan Coast Guard helicopter and flew over Chunxiao to inspect Chinese gas field, which immediately caught public attention. He then spoke to the press on June 29 that China had failed to respond to Japan's data request, so he wanted Japan to conduct its own survey. Although the foreign ministries of both sides repeatedly urged "peaceful consultations" by early July, the heat and pressure that the media

and Nakagawa had generated in Japan were already too strong for the government to resist. The Japanese survey went ahead on July 7.

In mid-October the two foreign ministries agreed to hold their first working level talk on ECS, and China temporarily suspended exploration activities. Yet shortly before the talk Nakagawa fueled the tension by telling Fuji TV that he had information that Beijing had granted Chinese companies the rights to explore natural gas in Japan's EEZ. He stressed that Japan could be placed at a greater disadvantage if Tokyo failed to say "what it needs to say."¹³³ On October 20, a group of about 90 nonpartisan lawmakers exerted more pressure on the government by adopting a resolution demanding that Gaimushō act firmly against Beijing to defend Japanese resources.¹³⁴ Not surprisingly, the negotiation held on October 25 failed to make any progress, as the situation at home prevented Gaimushō from softening its position.

In February 2005 Nakagawa again seized news headline by telling TV audience that it was "highly likely" that Chinese exploration activities were crossing the median line into Japan's EEZ. He then asserted that testing drilling for Japan in the area was "naturally an option."¹³⁵ After that the media drumbeat of support for Japanese test drilling pressed on and pressure in the Diet remained high. In March 2005 the opposition DPJ introduced a draft bill calling for government protection of Japanese oil companies engaged in exploration. And in April members from LDP, Kōmeitō and DPJ took a plane to inspect China's exploration activities in ECS.¹³⁶ A keyword search of Diet session proceedings on "gas field" during the climax of the disputes also shows that Japanese parliamentarians, serving as the spokespersons for their constituencies, constantly grilled cabinet members and officials for being "too soft" on Chinese provocation and failing to protect Japan's national interest.¹³⁷ Not only LDP politicians but also opposition party members frequently spoke in favor of tough policies against China in the Diet, citing an "upwelling of public emotions."¹³⁸ While Chinese and Japanese diplomats managed to hold their second talk on the ECS issue at the end of May, Nakagawa again spoiled the atmosphere right before the talk, when he blasted China for continuing gas exploration while trying to hold talks with Japan. He said, "It is like shaking hands with the right hand and striking with the left hand."¹³⁹ Soon after the fruitless May talk, METI announced it would grant drilling rights to Japan's Teikoku Oil.

Again, in September, only one day after Gaimushō announced that it would hold another talk with China, Nakagawa bluntly told the media that the Japanese government would "do its duty" to ensure the safety of Teikoku employees engaged in drilling, which in the eyes of China implied Japan's willingness to risk military conflict.¹⁴⁰ Thus bilateral tension was pushed to new heights. In mid-October, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* published a public poll in which 70 percent of Japanese respondents thought China should suspend its gas exploration in ECS, and 65 percent said that if China refused to stop, Japan should develop its own gas fields in the region.¹⁴¹ Apparently propelled by the prevailing public sentiment favoring a tough stance vis-à-vis China, both ruling LDP and the opposition DPJ accelerated legislative efforts to protect Japan's gas exploration in ECS. The tension only relaxed after Nakagawa left METI to become Koizumi's Agriculture Minister in November, and the two governments began more frequent diplomatic talks from early 2006.

This brief review of the ECS disputes indicates that through sensational reports and inflammatory speeches the media and politicians could dramatize certain foreign policy issue and quickly arouse an upsurge of nationalistic public mood. The powerful tide of public opinion then motivated actors across the political spectrum to push for a resolute stance vis-à-vis the other country. Leading the boisterous chorus of “defending national interest” and “go tough against China,” hawks like Nakagawa gained both personal fame and political clout, utilizing which they applied heavy influence in government policy deliberation. True, not all Japanese politicians called for confrontation with China, but the hawks gained the upper hand over the moderates. The Gaimushō, constantly prodded by the media and Nakagawa and fearing more damage to its credibility, could not afford to show any sign of “softness.” As its Chinese counterpart faced a similar plight at home, reaching a diplomatic compromise on the issue was far out of reach despite repeated negotiations.

Testing Prediction 2: Historical Memory and Chinese and Japanese Elite Perception

The perception of Japan by Chinese elites shows considerable apprehension about the security implication of the perceived Japanese denial of war responsibility, indicating the effect of the mechanism of *intention*. During the Koizumi era, a normal pattern in the official Chinese media was to link Japan’s war memory explicitly with the possibility that its past militarism might reappear and prove the notion that Japan was an untrustworthy country. For example, in July 2003 the *People’s Daily* published a lengthy editorial, raising sharp questions about the “New Thinking” on Japan. Replying to the question “Is Japan’s seeking the status of a big military power a normal pursuit?” the author claimed:

Generally speaking, of course, a country has a right to . . . establish and develop its own national defense strength; however, for Japan, the circumstances are not exactly the same. There are two reasons for this: First, in the past Japan has launched many wars of aggression, causing extremely big disasters and harm. Up to now, it has refused to admit and show remorse for its crimes in the war of aggression against China . . . Second, Japan’s military strength has exceeded its defense needs. Japan’s foreign security policy has gradually exceeded the boundary of “for defense only” . . . How can it be possible that people are not worried about a Japan which has refused to show remorse for its war of aggression, which is wantonly developing its military power, which has abandoned the policy of “for defense only,” and which is planning to revise its constitution of peace?

The author insisted that the Yasukuni issue and Japan’s rightwing distortion of history must be treated as matters of principle, and “this principle cannot be shaken.” “As Japan’s neighboring country and as a country that has been subjected to Japanese aggression, China must maintain vigilance against the right-deviation posture of Japan’s politics,” urged the author.¹⁴²

While the official rhetoric might be politically manipulated for the purpose of propaganda, Chinese strategic analyses on Japan, published in academic and policy-oriented journals designed to influence government policy, also demonstrated a genuine

disapproval of Japan's historiography and deep dissatisfaction about its lack of sincere contrition, based on which they strongly suspected what Japan's future intent might be. For example, one author opined, "while its military power increase does not necessarily mean Japan would be entangled in military conflict, such risk should not be ignored . . . And if to consider the rising Japanese nationalist thoughts that lack correct understanding of the history, one may argue that Japan would become the biggest factor of instability in Asia."¹⁴³ Other Chinese analysts believed that Japan would not have increased its military power in the first place if it had truly come to terms with its past. Another author claimed the same nationalist and militarist thoughts that had caused Japanese aggression in the past remained influential in Japan, which could justify its historical amnesia, eliminate its sense of national shame, and remove the psychological obstacles keeping the country from becoming a great military power.¹⁴⁴

A keyword search in the China Academic Journals database shows the vast majority of the total of 67 analytical articles (excluding news pieces and articles introducing specific Japanese weapon systems) within the military category of "Japan" published during 2004–05 warned of a fast-increasing Japanese military power and its strategic assertiveness. Of these, 34 articles explicitly claimed this trend in the Japanese military to be occurring which, compounded with the surge of revisionist historiography in Japan, was particularly dangerous.¹⁴⁵ The same pattern appeared in this author's interviews of Chinese elites as well, where 14 out of the total 20 interviewees expressed concerns about Japan's strategic intent as result of its failure to face the past. The data suggest that a *significant* proportion of Chinese analysts were affected by the memory-derived mechanism of *intention* in addition to pure material calculation.

Similarly, a closer look at the Japanese perception of China suggests that disapproval by elites in the way that China handled the history of the war was also an important, if not the only, factor that stimulated Japanese uneasiness about a potential China threat.

From the Chinese perspective, its "hundred-year humiliation" under foreign imperialist aggression explained Chinese indignation towards the Japanese distortion of history and justified China's assertiveness in foreign and defense affairs today as history seemed to show a country would only suffer if it was weak and docile. But the Chinese perspective did not impress the Japanese, who interpreted the history quite differently. Japanese hardliners tried to exonerate Japan's war guilt and blamed other countries for imposing the war on Japan. Nakanishi Terumasa from the Kyoto University, for instance, argued that the real cause of the Manchuria Incident was the rampant anti-Japanese revolts in China that violated Japan's "legitimate rights" there, and that the soft-kneed Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō at the time was a real war criminal.¹⁴⁶ In a special series published in the conservative magazine *Shokun* in February 2006, "History Lectures: If Told by China Like That, Respond Like This!", about 30 Japanese scholars and intellectuals each penned a rebuttal to the Chinese view on a historical event, such as the Manchuria Incident, Nanjing Massacre, and Japanese colonization of Taiwan.

Even those who admitted Japanese aggression generally rejected China's history bashing as they believed Japan had been a peaceful country after the war and made considerable efforts to atone for its guilt. Kitaoka Shinichi, Deputy Ambassador to the

UN and a professor from the University of Tokyo, argued that China itself renounced war compensation for political reasons, but Japan apologized to China many times and provided China with economic aid. Admitting that Japanese apologies were not as forthright as Germany's, Kitaoka claimed Japanese war crimes were no comparison to the genocidal Holocaust. He also criticized the history distortion in China's own textbooks, and defended that Koizumi's shrine visits and Japanese textbooks did not glorify aggression.¹⁴⁷

If China's assertive attitude was unjustifiable in the historical and present contexts, Japanese elites believed that China was developing a dangerous nationalist trend seeking to shake off national humiliation through the resurrection of a "greater Chinese empire." Although it might be far-fetched to think China would come after Japan in a revanchist move right away, they were afraid it would act more aggressively in the region and threaten the interest of its neighbors. The director of RIPS, Watanabe Akio, applauded China's thesis of a "peaceful rise" as the first step to having sound great power consciousness. But he also suggested that by emphasizing the history of "hundred-year humiliation" and eulogizing the "glorious resurrection of the Chinese nation," this thesis betrayed the deep-seated resentment and sense of inferiority, and raised the suspicion that China was attempting to rebuild the old dream of the "China Order."¹⁴⁸ A Japanese expert on the Chinese military, Hiramatsu Shigeo, noted that beginning in 1949 the CCP leaders aspired to restore the great Chinese empire that had been eroded by Western imperialist aggression; their ambition was to bring the broad "frontier regions" into the empire and dominate Asia, without any respect for the national sovereignty of neighboring countries. Thus Hiramatsu saw China's military buildup and active intervention in Taiwan and the ECS as clear indicators of its expansionist intention rather than for legitimate self-defense purposes.¹⁴⁹

Furthermore, Japanese elites felt that China intentionally used the history card, either to scapegoat Japan for domestic political reasons, or to seize the high moral ground and relegate Japan to a subordinate position in the overall bilateral relationship. Nakanishi claimed that China's recent infringement of Japan's sovereignty rights in the ECS and the anti-Japanese riots had simply repeated the historical pattern stemming from the Manchuria Incident that Japan was always the first foreign country to be targeted whenever the Chinese nation tried to reunify itself; China used the Yasukuni Shrine and textbook issues to cover up its domestic political machination.¹⁵⁰ Kitaoka was frustrated that China had cited history in denying Japan a greater role in the new world order, by thwarting the Japanese bid for UN Security Council permanent membership, and blowing the whistle on Japanese militarism whenever the SDF went overseas to make an "international contribution."¹⁵¹ Several other hawkish elites, like Nakajima Mineo and Noda Nobuo, bluntly claimed the relationship with China was not mutually beneficial because China still thought of East Asia as the "tributary international order," and its harsh bashing of Japan on the history issue was just one link in building this order. They urged the Japanese government to reject the "diplomacy of atonement" (*shokuzai*) or "diplomacy of being outranked" (*kuraimake gaikō*), but to instead take a strategy of opposition (*taikō*), or showdown (*taiketsu*) towards China.¹⁵²

To be fair, not all Japanese elites held such hard-line views. Some moderates tended to strike a balance between Chinese and Japanese responsibility for the history disputes. Tanaka Akihiko, a leading scholar on Chinese studies, stated that many historical problems occurred because Japan had first provoked, and then China and South Korea responded by condemnation. Former senior diplomat Okamoto Yukio also argued that Japan could have apologized to China more thoroughly to resolve the history issue. But both Tanaka and Okamoto attributed the anti-Japanese demonstrations in the spring of 2005 to China's patriotic education that gave rise to a stereotyped image of Japan and the rapid spread of internet use in China that instantly mobilized mass movement.¹⁵³ Others disagreed that Beijing intentionally used anti-Japanese patriotic education to promote national cohesion, instead believing Koizumi's Yasukuni visits and the Japanese textbooks had stimulated popular Chinese animosity. But they also expressed deep concerns about the radical emotions among Chinese young people, who misperceived the present Japan as militaristic and wanted all Japanese to be eliminated.¹⁵⁴ Thus even the moderate elites worried that Chinese nationalism derived from history could spin out of control and propel antagonistic Chinese actions towards Japan.

In short, similar to the way it caused Chinese suspicion of Japanese militarist ambition, adherence to its own historical view also elicited strong disapproval and deep worry in Japan regarding China's approach to international affairs. Furthermore, both sides felt self-righteous regarding their own behavior, without realizing that such behaviors might have appeared provocative and even threatening to the other country. Such mutual misperception is a classic recipe for the security dilemma.

Thus the mechanisms of *emotion* and *intention* derived from divergent historical memories functioned as a force multiplier for Chinese and Japanese mutual security concerns. When the prospect of their cooperation or rivalry appears indeterminate based on a purely capability-based realist perspective, the history factor could reinforce the intention-based perception of mutual threats and propel the tendency of worst-casing among elites. As we know, Japan's international specialists outside the government routinely participate in advisory committees to give input to government policymaking. In China, from the post-Deng years there has been a so-called "thickening of the elite" that involves more specialists both within government bureaucracy and outside the government in the policy deliberation and decision-making process.¹⁵⁵ Assuming that these elites had significant influence over foreign policymaking, their opinions should have been a driving force behind the government's decision to shun conciliatory policy options towards the other country during the Koizumi years.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

I have argued that the increased Sino-Japanese economic interdependence was a weak stabilizing force for their political ties. Instead, a "hot economy, cold politics" paradox appeared during the Koizumi years, when bilateral commercial ties continued to grow while the political relationship spiraled downward. It is possible that the constraining effect of economic interdependence will be more pronounced if war becomes a real danger. Yet economic ties cannot be counted on to moderate government positions over diplomatic and political friction that fall short of violent escalation, contrary to

the optimistic proposition of the commercial liberals. It should be noted that the power of *realpolitik* can pull things in an opposite direction. Since the Cold War, the reemergence of traditional patterns of a regional power struggle have been aggravated by the uneven economic growth of China and Japan. These factors have generated mutual security concerns about a profound power transition and the international instability that may accompany it.

However, these realist security concerns do not pre-determine a Sino-Japanese strategic rivalry in the foreseeable future. Unlikely to develop a true strategic partnership due to the lack of a common security threat, China and Japan still have a significant overlap in both economic and security interests. Additionally, despite its quick rise, China's power is still far from reaching parity with Japan as its true competitor. Neither do their sovereignty and resource disputes involve vital national interests, meaning that strategic confrontation over these disputes is not warranted if one is to focus on short-term material interest calculations.

Again, policymakers should not be overly optimistic about the future development of Sino-Japanese relations even if a conflict in fundamental interests or a major shift in the balance of power are lacking. A high degree of uncertainty exists precisely because there is no clear-cut motivation for them to balance against or cooperate with one another. What can sway the pendulum in the future is the perception of both long-term power trends and mutual intent, which is of concern to more fine-grained realists.

First, if the current disparity in growth between China and Japan continues for an extended period, it will indeed alter the structural setting in East Asia and increase the likelihood of a Sino-Japanese strategic rivalry. Additionally, Sino-Japanese relations do not unfold in an isolated world; particularly their future balance of power could cause the US-Japan alliance to respond in a variety of different ways, which in turn would significantly impact the dynamics between both China and Japan.

Second, to revisit Thompson's rivalry theory, categorization of strategic rivalry is not totally determined by states' material power, but also hinges on an actors' interpretation of the intentions of others, and so "is very much a social-psychological process."¹⁵⁶ Chinese and Japanese perceptions of mutual intent tend to be influenced first by their current behaviors, including each other's assertive military posture and alignment actions. Besides each other's external behaviors, the frequent flare-up of bilateral historiographic disputes can also exacerbate mutual perception of threatening intentions and generate popular emotional pressure for hard-line government policies towards the other country. Thus, the combination of the uncertain structural environment and unmitigated clash of memories between the two countries could breed a security dilemma and inadvertently pit the two states against one another strategically.

To stop the power of historical memory from plaguing bilateral relations, Beijing and Tokyo need first to refrain from politicizing the history issue in state propaganda and the diplomatic arena. In fact, some Chinese elites have recommended Beijing discard the counterproductive "history card" employed for winning diplomatic bargaining or catering to the domestic audience.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, Japanese leaders should avoid such provocative actions as visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and "slips of the tongue" glorifying Japan's history of aggression. Prime Minister Abe's refraining from Yasukuni since he took power has created a favorable atmosphere allowing the two governments to repair diplomatic ties.

Besides these immediate measures, the two governments should also make long-term efforts to resolve their conflict over war memories, particularly through a joint history investigation. As one of the first steps to mend relations after Abe succeeded Koizumi, the two governments launched a joint study of history involving historians from both two sides.¹⁵⁸ This is a significant step forward from the sporadic historians' dialogues of the mid-1980s that lacked official endorsement. This does not mean, however, that the two sides will quickly reach a consensus on every aspect of war history, especially after quarreling for decades over the issue.¹⁵⁹ Even after the joint report is due in 2008, consistent, long-term dialogue between Chinese and Japanese historians should continue. Furthermore, the joint history project faces two big challenges existing in previous programs. The first is the difficulty not just to criticize the biases and distortions in the other country's history textbooks but also to conduct serious self-criticism regarding the national myths in one's nation's own history writing. The second is the problem of official intervention, which tends to create political barriers for rigorous, candid joint investigation into historical events by professional historians.¹⁶⁰ To secure a long-term solution to the negative legacy of bilateral war history, both governments must learn to keep history out of politics, and politics out of history.

NOTES

1. Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security* Vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter 1993/94), pp. 5–33. For works with a generally pessimistic outlook, also see Richard K. Betts, "Wealth, Power, and Instability: East Asia and the United States after the Cold War," *International Security* Vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter 1993/94), pp. 34–77; Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security* Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 149–168; Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival* Vol. 36 No. 2 (Summer 1994), pp. 3–21.
2. David C. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks," *International Security* Vol. 2, No. 4 (Spring 2003), pp. 57–85; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?," *International Security* Vol. 27, No. 4 (Spring 2003), pp. 5–56.
3. Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2003), pp. 22–35; David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* Vol. 29, No. 3 (Winter 2004/05), pp. 64–99; Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007).
4. A fairly comprehensive list of these disputes can be found in June Teufel Dreyer, "Sino-Japanese Rivalry and Its Implications for Developing Nations," *Asian Survey* Vol. 46, No. 4 (2006), pp. 538–557.
5. Quoted from the remarks of Chinese State Councilor and former Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, in *The Japan Times*, December 12, 2005.
6. *Asahi.com*, February 9, 2006.
7. "Japan, China Spar Over Ship Intrusion," *BBC News*, February 7, 2007.
8. 2005 JETRO *White Paper on International Trade and Foreign Direct Investment*, available at http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/stats/white_paper/2005.pdf.
9. For examples of this view, see the liberal, positive-sum perspective on East Asian international relations discussed in Thomas J. Christensen, "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and U.S. Policy toward East Asia," *International Security* Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 81–126; "Economic Ties Binding Japan to Rival China," *The New York Times*, October 31, 2005.
10. Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); John Oneal and Bruce Russett, "The Classical Liberals Were Right: Democracy, Interdependence, and Conflict, 1950–1985," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 41, No. 2 (1997), pp. 267–293; Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (New York: Longman, 2001).
11. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), p. 17.
12. This assumption is believed to be more relevant in democracies than non-democracies, as legitimately elected leaders bear greater accountability for national policy than authoritarian leaders. But in the case of China, a high GDP growth rate is an indispensable pillar supporting the regime legitimacy of the communist government, so damages to the national economy should have a similar restraining effect on Chinese leaders as on Japanese leaders.

13. The assumptions for the two constraining mechanisms are drawn from Yinan He and Llewelyn Hughes, "Hot Economy and Cold Politics? Commerce and History in Sino-Japanese Relations," Paper presented at the ISA annual meeting, San Diego, March 22–25, 2006.
14. Michael Mastanduno, "Back to Normal? The Promise and Pitfalls of Japan's Economic Integration," in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2006–07: Trade, Interdependence, and Security* (Seattle and Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research), p. 133.
15. Koizumi's remarks at the Budgetary Committee of the Upper House, October 20, 2004, in *Kokkai Kaigiroku* [Proceedings of the National Diet of Japan], available at <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.
16. A representative expression of this view is made by Liu Junhong, an international specialist from China Institute of Contemporary International Relations. See "Will Political Chill Dampen Economic Ties?," *People's Daily*, March 28, 2006.
17. This is the majority view in author's interviews with 20 Chinese government officials, diplomats, think-tank analysts, and academics specialized in international relations and Japan studies in Beijing and Shanghai, May 10–25, 2006. For obvious reasons, the identities of the interviewees cannot be revealed.
18. Author's interview with an economist from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, May 19, 2006.
19. One study suggests that China's economic dependence on Japan used to be three times that of Japan on China in 1990, but reduced to one-third by 2002. See Shang Ming, "Zhongri Maoyi Yilai Guanxi Zhi Xinbian" [The New Changes in Sino-Japanese Trade Dependence], *Zhongguo Waizi* [Foreign Investment in China], February 2005, pp. 41–43. An interviewee from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) (May 11, 2006) put the figure for the contribution of China trade to Japanese GDP growth at 0.8 percentage points per year. Another interviewee from the Chinese Foreign Ministry (May 11, 2006) stated that Japan relied on China more than China on Japan, so China has no favor to ask of Japan [中国无求于日本]; if Japan did not care about losing economic interest for political reasons, China would keep it company [可以奉陪].
20. Interestingly, Koizumi's China policy seemed to be based on a similar assumption that economically China needed Japan more than Japan needed China, so if economic relations decline it would bring more trouble to China than Japan. See Yoichi Funabashi, "Japan–China Business Relations: Yasukuni and the Koizumi 'Risk Factor,'" *Asahi Shimbun*, May 18, 2004.
21. For example, the interviewee from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (May 19, 2006) said if bilateral commercial ties were damaged, it would hurt China more because China's GDP was still smaller than Japan's. Yet he insisted that China could not compromise on Yasukuni since too many Chinese people suffered during World War II.
22. For an example, see JETRO, "Special Survey of Japanese Business in China – Impact of the April Anti-Japan Demonstrations," June 2005. Available at <http://www.jetro.go.jp>.
23. For example, in a survey of over 10,000 Japanese corporations in May 2005, nearly 80 percent anticipated the negative impact of the anti-Japanese political conditions in China on the future Japanese economy, and over 60 percent of firms in Transportation/Warehousing, Wholesale, and Manufacturing sectors were concerned about their own industries' future, more so than other sectors. See Teikoku Databank, "Research on Influences of Increased Country Risk in China," May 2005. Available at <http://www.tdb.co.jp>.
24. The focus of investigation is the Japanese business lobby because Chinese firms having special business connections with Japan lack organization and a unified voice, and are thus unable to influence central government policy.
25. "Keidanren Made Covert Trip to China Last Month," *The Japan Times*, October 23, 2005.
26. "Japan's New Business Leader Fujio Mitarai Backs Koizumi's Asian Diplomacy," *AFP*, January 23, 2006. FBIS. wnc.dialog.com.
27. "Japanese Business Group Calls on P.M. to Halt Yasukuni Visits," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 10, 2006.
28. See "Overview of Keizai Doyukai – Who We Are." Available at <http://www.doyukai.or.jp>.
29. I thank Llewelyn Hughes for sharing this information with me.
30. "Japan: Poll of JCs Shows 69% Think Japan Not to Blame for Protests in PRC, ROK," *Sankei Shimbun*, April 18, 2005. FBIS. wnc.dialog.com.
31. Michael R. Chambers, "Rising China: The Search for Power and Plenty," in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2006–07: Trade, Interdependence, and Security*, (Seattle and Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research), pp. 65–103.
32. Dale Copeland, "Economic Interdependence and the Future of U.S.–Chinese Relations," in Ikenberry and Mastanduno, eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, pp. 323–352.
33. For recent studies suggesting the rise of Sino-Japanese rivalry, see Benjamin Self, "China and Japan: A Facade of Friendship," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter 2003), pp. 77–88; Dreyer, "Sino-Japanese Rivalry and Its Implications for Developing Nations"; Kent Calder, "China and Japan's Simmering Rivalry," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 85, No. 2 (March/April 2006), pp. 129–139. "Sino-Japanese Rivalry: A CNA, IDA, NDU/INSS, and Pacific Forum CSIS Project Report," *Issues and Insights* Vol. 7, No. 2 (March 2007).
34. On relative gains as an impediment to international cooperation, see Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organization* Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 485–507.
35. The representative work espousing systemic realism is Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979).
36. Ryosei Kokubun, "The Shifting Nature of Japan–China Relations after the Cold War," in Peng Er Lam, ed., *Japan's Relations with China: Facing A Rising Power* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 23–26.

37. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry."
38. On a bipolar stability theory, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 161–193; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990), pp. 5–56.
39. Aaron L. Friedberg, "Will Europe's Past Be Asia's Future?," *Survival* Vol. 42, No. 3 (Autumn 2000), pp. 147–159.
40. Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter 1990/1991), pp. 7–57.
41. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972), p. 23.
42. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
43. William R. Thompson, "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 45, No. 4 (December 2001), p. 558.
44. Michael Green, "Future Visions of Asian Security: The Five Rings," *Asian Policy* No. 3 (January 2007), pp. 19–24. Chinese international analysts also frequently cited China's rising and/or the emergence of a so-called "dual-strong power" structure as one of the important causes of the deterioration in recent Sino-Japanese relation. Author's interviews in China, May 10–25, 2006.
45. Robert Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia," *Security Studies* Vol. 15, No. 3 (July–September 2006), pp. 355–395.
46. The IMF ranks China's estimated per capita GDP for 2006 as 87th, and Japan's as 18th in the world, using purchasing power parities, which gives China a much larger GDP than the method of constant GDP. See International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2007.
47. Recent estimates of China's actual military spending by Rand Corporation, Council on Foreign Relations, International Institute of Strategic Studies, and US Department of Defense vary from 1.4 to 3 times of the official figure. See David Shambaugh, "China's Military Modernization: Making Steady and Surprising Progress," in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2005–06: Military Modernization in An Era of Uncertainty* (Seattle and Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research), p. 79.
48. Christopher P. Twomey, "Japan, A Circumscribed Balancer: Building on Defensive Realism to Make Predictions about East Asian Security," *Security Studies* Vol. 9, No. 4 (Summer 2000), p. 186.
49. Data are from ASDF official website at <http://www.mod.go.jp>.
50. *Annual Report to the Congress-Military Power of the People's Republic of China – 2005 and 2007* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2007); International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2007*. China's submarine forces in particular drew considerable external attention in recent years, such as during the "Han Incident" in November 2004 that will be discussed later, and when it appears that China is developing second-generation nuclear submarines with the *Jin*-class and the *Shang*-class. See Peter Howarth, *China's Rising Sea Power: The PLA Navy's Submarine Challenge* (New York: Frank Cass, 2006); "Submarine Incident With U.S. Stirs Anxiety About China's Navy," *Wall Street Journal*, November 15, 2006; Andrew S. Erickson and Lyle J. Goldstein, "China's Future Nuclear Submarine Force: Insights from Chinese Writings," *Naval War College Review* (Winter 2007), pp. 55–79.
51. Twomey, "Japan, A Circumscribed Balancer," p. 188.
52. Eric A. McVadon, "China's Maturing Navy," *Naval War College Review* Vol. 59, No. 2 (Spring 2006), p. 93.
53. Shambaugh, "China's Military Modernization," p. 91.
54. Christopher W. Hughes, "Japanese Military Modernization: In Search of a 'Normal' Security Role," in Tellis and Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2005–06*, p. 127; "Abe and Bush Agree to Speed up Ballistic Missile Shield," *The Japan Times*, November 19, 2006.
55. "Koizumi: Rising China no Threat," xinhuanet.com, December 28, 2005.
56. Peng Er Lam, "Japan's Deteriorating Ties with China: The Koizumi Factor," *China: An International Journal* Vol. 3, No. 2 (September 2005) pp. 275–291. The Council on Security and Defense Capabilities Report (Araki Report) released in October 2004 can be found at <http://www.globalsecurity.org> (accessed November 1, 2007). Japanese defense white papers and the "National Defense Program Guideline for FY2005 and After" are available at <http://www.mod.go.jp>.
57. *Ajia no Anzen Hoshō* [Asian Security] 2004–05 (Tokyo: Heiwa Anzen Hoshō Kenkyūjo [Research Institute for Peace and Security], 2004).
58. See, for instance, Kayahara Ikuo, "Chūgoku no kokubō kindaika to ajia no kinchō" [China's Defense Modernization and Tension in Asia], *Chūō Kōron* (May 2005), pp. 204–215. A former military officer and research fellow at the Japan Institute of Defense Research, Kayahara is a leading proponent of the China threat argument in Japan.
59. Japanese Defense White Paper, various years.
60. In bilateral economic relations Japan enjoys great comparative advantage in component manufacture while China is strong in the assembly of products. See Japan Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, *White Paper on International Economy and Trade 2004*, available at <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/report/index.html>.
61. Quoted from Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's speech at the Japanese Diet, April 12, 2007. Available at <http://www.chinaembassy.org.in>.
62. For discussions on the prospect of Chinese military conquering of Taiwan, see Michael O'Hanlon, "Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan," *International Security* Vol. 25, No. 2 (Fall 2000), pp. 51–86; Michael A. Glosny,

- "Strangulation from the Sea? A PRC Submarine Blockade of Taiwan," *International Security* Vol. 28, No. 4 (Spring 2004), pp. 125–160.
63. "Japan, China Clash over Senkaku," *BBC News*, January 16, 2004; "Kawaguchi, Wen Clash over Senkakus, Yasukuni," *The Japan Times*, April 1, 2004.
 64. "Gas and Oil Rivalry in the East China Sea," *Asia Times*, July 27, 2004.
 65. Selig S. Harrison, *Seabed Petroleum in Northeast Asia: Conflict or Cooperation?* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2005).
 66. "China Estimates Chunxiao Gas Field Reserves at 36.9 Million Barrels," *Sankei Shimbun*, February 4, 2005. FBIS. wnc.dialog.com.
 67. "Unocal, Royal Dutch Petroleum withdraw from Chinese natural gas project," *AP News*, September 29, 2004.
 68. Shanghai's natural gas problem was actually caused by the overconfidence in the "xiqi dongsong" (west gas sent east) project that brought about a hasty policy change in past few years to switch the fuel for residential and large enterprise (like the Baoshan Steel) use in Shanghai from coal gas to natural gas. It turned out that *xiqi dongsong* had to supply not just Shanghai but also Beijing and other coastal areas. Gas supply from the ECS, initially large, soon became unstable and could not be a viable solution. But Shanghai still had the option of resorting to the less clean but cheaper coal gas, which was used to meet local demand when the natural gas supply was low. Author's interviews with a formal Shell senior strategist specialized in China energy projects (May 10, 2006) and an official from the state-owned Shenergy Group, the largest gas and electricity supplier for Shanghai (May 24, 2006).
 69. Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "Security Seeking under Anarchy: Defensive Realism Revisited," *International Security* Vol. 25, No. 3 (Winter 2000/01), p. 141.
 70. Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China," p. 360. Also see John C. Matthews III, "Current Gains and Future Outcomes: When Cumulative Relative Gains Matter," *International Security* Vol. 21, No. 1 (Summer 1996), pp. 112–146.
 71. Taliaferro group realists who take into consideration not just structural power factors but also such unit-level variables as domestic politics and elite belief systems and misperceptions into the school of defensive neoclassical realism. This school is however criticized for being no longer realist because it repudiates or dilutes the core assumptions of realism. Yet this article considers defensive realism as a fine-tuned, more sophisticated realism than that fixated on pure material power. See Taliaferro, "Security Seeking under Anarchy," p. 129. For more discussions on realism as a broad paradigm containing a wide diversity of theories and hypotheses regarding foreign policy and international relations, also see Stephen G. Brooks, "Dueling Realisms," *International Organization* Vol. 51, No. 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 445–477; Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 11–12.
 72. "Japan Alarmed by Chinese 'Threat,'" *BBC News*, December 22, 2005; "ASDF General Labels China 'Threat,'" *The Japan Times*, February 18, 2006.
 73. Tsukasa Takamine, "A New Dynamism in Sino-Japanese Security Relations: Japan's Strategic Use of Foreign Aid," *The Pacific Review* Vol. 18, No. 4 (December 2005), p. 443.
 74. The two potential scenarios regarding the rise of China, Sino-Japanese balance of power change, and different patterns of US–China–Japan triangle are discussed in John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001), pp. 399–400; and Mike M. Mochizuki, "Japan's Shifting Strategy toward the Rise of China," *Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 30, No. 4–5 (August–October 2007), pp. 739–776.
 75. Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 25–26.
 76. Klaus Knorr, *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1976), p. 84.
 77. Peter A. Dutton, "International Law and the November 2004 'Han Incident,'" *Asian Security* Vol. 2, No. 2 (2006), pp. 87–101.
 78. For a summary of the reactions of Japan's major newspapers after the submarine incident, see "Japanese Media Speculate on Motives Behind PRC Submarine Incursion," November 29, 2004. FBIS-CHI-2004-1129.
 79. See China's National Defense White Papers in 2004 and 2006. Available at <http://english.gov.cn>
 80. Li Shaojun ed., *Guoji Zhanlue Baogao* [Reports on International Strategy] (Beijing: Zhonguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 2005), pp. 447–448; China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, *Guoji Zhanlue yu Anquan Xingshi Pinggu 2005–2006* [Strategic and Security Review] (Beijing, Shishi Chubanshe, 2006), pp. 102–104; "Japan Seeks to Become Major Military Power," *PLA Daily*, May 13, 2002. FBIS. wnc.dialog.com
 81. Hu Rongzhong, "Ribei junshi daguohua de xingdongxiang" [Japan's Becoming A Military Great Power: The New Trends], *Riben Xuekan* [Journal of Japanese Studies] No. 5 (2004), pp. 24–38; Wang Chiming, "Meijun quanqiu bushu tiaozheng yu riben mianlin de jueze" [American Global Strategic Realignment and Japan's Choices], *Taipingyang Xuebao* [Pacific Journal] No. 1 (2005), pp. 56–63; Li Jianmin, "Leng-zhan jieshuhou riben junshi zhanlue tiaozheng de lujing fenxi" [Analysis of Japan's Military Strategic Readjustment Path after the Cold War], *Guoji Luntan* [International Forum] Vol. 7, No. 3 (May 2005), pp. 64–68.
 82. David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, and Prospects* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2002), pp. 3–8.

83. Christopher P. Twomey, "The Dangers of Overreaching: International Relations Theory, the US–Japanese Alliance, and China," in Benjamin L. Self and Jeffrey W. Thompson, eds., *An Alliance for Engagement: Building Cooperation in Security Relations with China* (Washington, DC: Henry L. Stimson Center 2002), p. 24.
84. For a comprehensive discussion of China's complex feeling about the US–Japan alliance, see Thomas C. Christensen, "China, the U.S.–Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security* Vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring 1999), pp. 49–80.
85. On the role of cognitive schema in foreign policymaking, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976); Robert M. Axelrod, *Framework for A General Theory of Cognition and Choice* (Berkeley: University of California, 1972); Robert M. Axelrod, *Structure of Decision: The Cognitive Maps of Political Elites* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976).
86. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, pp. 187–188.
87. Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 50–57; Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).
88. Thomas U. Berger, "Power and Purpose in Pacific East Asia: A Constructivist Interpretation," in Ikenberry and Mastanduno, eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, p. 388.
89. Allen Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Thomas Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 75, No. 5 (1996).
90. For a comprehensive review of the literature on social memory study, see Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 24, No. 1 (1998), pp. 105–140.
91. Not all national myths are instrumentally constructed or subject to falsification. In order to understand the negative impact of history disputes on international relations, I focus on those pernicious national myths that tend to spur international conflict. See Stephen Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," *International Security* Vol. 18, No. 4 (1994), pp. 5–39; Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000); and Ben Kiernan, "Myth, Nationalism and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* Vol. 3, No. 2 (2001), pp. 187–206.
92. For a more extensive discussion on the origins and nature of national myths, see Yanan He, *Overcoming Shadows of the Past: Post-Conflict Interstate Reconciliation in East Asia and Europe*, PhD dissertation, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, 2004.
93. Herbert Kelman, "Social-psychological Dimensions of International Conflict," in I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen, eds., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), pp. 212–215.
94. Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies," *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (July 1991), p. 482. While the existing studies on public opinion and foreign policy mainly focus on Western democracies, it has a certain degree of validity when applied to some authoritarian cases where the society is quite open and the state is vulnerable to public criticism due to the lack of legitimacy.
95. Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 41–42.
96. Yanan He, "Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950–2006," *History and Memory* Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 2007), pp. 43–74.
97. "Machimura Blasts China's Textbooks as 'Extreme'," *The Japan Times*, April 25, 2005.
98. Jiang Lifeng, "Zhongguo Minzhong dui Reben de Buqinjingan Xianzhu Zengqiang" [The Evident Increase of Chinese Public Feeling of Alienation to Japan], *Riben Xuekan* [Journal of Japanese Studies] No. 6 (2004).
99. "Over Half of Chinese, Japanese Down on Ties: Poll," *The Japan Times*, August 25, 2005.
100. Japan–China Society of Media Studies (JCC), *Zhongri Xianghu Yishi yu Chuanmei de Zuoyong* [Sino-Japanese Mutual Perception and the Role of the Media], 2005. Available at <http://www.jccnet.cn> (accessed October 28, 2005).
101. Japanese historian Yoshida notes, for example, that although the majority of Japanese people admit that Japan launched a war of aggression, they also accept various excuses that would minimize the guilt of the nation or prove their personal innocence. See Yutaka Yoshida, *Nihonjin no Sensōkan* [The Japanese Views of War] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998).
102. Whiting, *China Eyes Japan*, p. 196.
103. "Japan: China is 'Scary Country'," *CNN.com*, April 12, 2005.
104. *Xinhua Daily Telegraph*, July 16, 2005. Available at <http://news.xinhuanet.com> (accessed September 29, 2005).
105. Available at <http://military.china.com> (accessed February 20, 2006).
106. "As China Grows More Powerful, Regional Rivalries Take New Turn," *Chicago Tribune*, April 12, 2005.
107. Joseph Fewsmith and Stanley Rosen, "The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does 'Public Opinion' Matter?," in David M. Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 151–187.
108. See, for instance, transcripts of online discussions between netizens and the Assistant to Foreign Minister Shen Guofang in July 2004, and Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei in January 2005. Accessed February 24, 2006 at <http://bbs.fmprc.gov.cn/index.jsp>. Also see Junhao Hong, "The Internet and China's Foreign Policy Making," and

- Xin-An(Lucian) Lu, "Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Age of Internet," in Yufan Hao and Lin Su, eds., *China's Foreign Policy Making: Societal Force and Chinese American Policy* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 93–121.
109. Interview on May 14, 2006.
 110. Interview on May 11, 2006.
 111. *Zaobao.com*, October 23, 2001. Available at <http://www.zaobao.com> (accessed February 16, 2006).
 112. "Release on Internet of Translated Version of Japanese Articles Annoys Beijing," *Sankei Shimbun*, September 7, 2000.
 113. Author's interview with a well-informed Chinese international affairs analyst in Beijing, May 14, 2006.
 114. For an example of such argument, see Okamoto Yukio and Tanaka Akihiko, "Hu Jintao seiken o yurugasu 'aikoku' bōsō to sekai no shisen" [Shaking the Hu Jintao Regime: The Rampant Patriotism and the View of the World], *Chūō Kōron* (June 2005), pp. 33–41.
 115. Author's interviews with one Chinese diplomat and one international analyst from the PLA, May 11 and May 17, 2006. This also explains Hu's agreeing to hold summit meeting with Prime Minister Abe in fall 2006. Hu now felt less constrained by Jiang's policy because not only did Abe avoid provoking Beijing by shunning the Shrine, but also Hu had recently gained ground in domestic politics after turning his proposal to "build a harmonious socialist society" into official policy at the annual Plenary of the CCP Central Committee in October 2006.
 116. "Sankei Poll: 57 Percent Support Description of Takeshima, Senkaku in Textbooks," *Sankei Shimbun*, April 11, 2005. Trans., FBIS. wnc.dialog.com.
 117. One of the dramatic incidents that caused the negative turn in Japanese media's attitude toward China was Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit to Japan in 1998, when his harsh criticism of Japan's historical view touched off widespread Japanese resentment against China.
 118. Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Interaction, Logic, and Transformation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 149.
 119. Haruhiro Fukui, "Studies in Policymaking: A Review of the Literature," in T. J. Pempel, ed., *Policymaking in Contemporary Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 22–35.
 120. Quoted in Fukui, "Studies in Policymaking," p. 45.
 121. T. J. Pempel, "Japanese Democracy and Political Culture: A Comparative Perspective," *PS. Political Science and Politics* Vol. 25, No. 1 (March 1992), p. 11; Akio Watanabe, "Foreign Policy Making, Japanese Style," *International Affairs* Vol. 54, No. 1 (January 1978), pp. 75–88; Risse-Kappen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies."
 122. Paul Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War on Terrorism: Implications for Japan's Security Strategy*, Policy Studies No. 27 (Washington: East-West Center), p. 8.
 123. Another direct channel for Japanese public opinion to influence government policy is the town meetings set up during the Koizumi administration to allow voters to exchange views with government officials on various policy issues. But a recent report discloses that two-thirds of these meetings were "shows" staged by the government, with people paid to ask planted questions favorable to the government. See "Japan's Leaders Rigged Voter Forums, a Government Report Says," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2006.
 124. Tsukasa Takamine, "Domestic Determinants of Japan's China Aid Policy: The Changing Balance of Foreign Policymaking Power," *Japanese Studies* No. 22, No. 2 (2002), pp. 191–206.
 125. Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War on Terrorism*, p. 9.
 126. It is a consistent pattern in Japanese polls that when asked why they supported the Koizumi cabinet, more pollsters would cite his "political posture" and "trustworthiness" than his "policies" or "actual accomplishments." See *Yoron Chōsa Nenkan*, 2002–04.
 127. "Japanese Public Survey on Yasukuni," *The Japan Times*, May 28, 2005.
 128. Japanese public attitude on the shrine visits was at best divided in polls, but those critical of the visits often ended up supporting his government because his resistance to foreign pressure appealed to many Japanese.
 129. "AFP: Japanese Government Spokesman Abe Criticizes China Over Talks Boycott," January 8, 2006. Trans., FBIS. wnc.dialog.com.
 130. A Gaimushō official said his ministry was the moderate minority in Japan on China policy, but sometimes had to follow domestic public opinion, or it would lose credibility; so in the future if something happened between the two countries, Gaimushō would be in a difficult position. Author's interview, November 17, 2004. Also see Koji Murata, "Domestic Sources of Japanese Policy toward China," in Lam, ed., *Japan's Relations with China*, pp. 45–46; Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, pp. 142–146.
 131. "China's Offensive Actions Require Urgent Plan," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, June 19, 2004, cited in *Comparative Connections: Japan-China Relations*, CSIS, Vol. 6, No. 2 (July 2004), p. 125; "Govt Foot-Dragging on China Gas Rig Blamed on Ministry Sectionalism," *The Daily Yomiuri*, June 20, 2004; "EEZ Dispute Dismays Japan Oil Firms," *The Daily Yomiuri*, June 24, 2004.
 132. Japanese MOFA Press Conference June 22, 2004. Available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp>.
 133. "Japan Minister Says China Giving Companies Exploration Rights in Disputed Zone," *Kyodo News*, October 17, 2004, in *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.
 134. "Japanese MPs Urge 'resolute' Stance on China Gas Exploration," *Kyodo News*, October 20, 2004, in *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.
 135. "Japan to Renew Demand for Information on Chinese Gas Project," *Kyodo News*, February 20, 2005, in *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.

136. *Comparative Connections: Japan–China Relations*, CSIS Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2005), p. 126.
137. *Kokkai Kaigiroku*, May 2004–October 2005.
138. See, for examples, Diet speeches by LDP politicians Masuzoe Yoichi (June 11, 2004), Suzuki Keisuke (October 26, 2004), Kobayashi Yutaka (November 2, 2004), who also published a book titled *The National Lifeline: Toward the Establishment of Strategic Resources and Energy Diplomacy* in September 2006, Nakanishi Kazuyoshi (November 10, 2004), Harada Yoshiaki (November 12, 2004), Ono Tsuyako (January 26, 2005), and Okada Naoki (April 14, 2005), and Mizuochi Toshiei (July 20, 2005, and July 25, 2005). Also see Diet speeches by DPJ politicians Maehara Seiji (August 4, 2004, and October 26, 2004), Fujiwara Masashi (January 26, 2005, and March 18, 2005), and Hosono Goshi (May 13, 2005).
139. “Japan Cannot Accept China’s ‘Outrageous’ Sea Gas Exploration Projects,” *Kyodo News*, May 27, 2005, in *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.
140. “Japan to Guard Teikoku Oil if Gas-field Talks Fail,” *The Japan Times*, September 22, 2005.
141. “Poll: 70% Want China to Suspend Gas Drilling,” *The Daily Yomiuri*, October 18, 2005.
142. “Article Views ‘Obstacles’ to Sino-Japanese Relations,” *The People’s Daily*, July 22, 2003. Trans., FBIS. wnc.dialog.com. For similar views in the official media, also see “Take Warning against the Revival of Japanese Militarism,” *Liaowang*, December 15, 2005. Trans., FBIS. wnc.dialog.com
143. Li, “Lengzhan Jieshuhou de Riben Junshi Zhanlue Tiaozheng de Lujing Fenxi,” p. 68.
144. Lu Chuan, “Riben chuantong wenhua yu junshi guannian” [Japan’s Traditional Culture and Military Ideas], *Riben Xuekan* [Journal of Japanese Studies] No. 5, (2004), pp. 135–149.
145. The rest simply described Japan’s military power increase without speculating its motivations or future ambitions, although this does not mean they would disagree on the history connection.
146. Nakanishi Terumasa, “Chūka bunmei no honnō o miyamatta: ‘Shidehara Kijūrō’ koso A-kyū Senpan” [Misreading the Instinct of Chinese Civilization: ‘Shidehara Kijūrō’ Surely Should be an A-class War Criminal], *Shokun* (February 2006), pp. 38–45.
147. Kitaoka Shinichi, “Jōnin rijikoku hairi wa nihon ga hatasu beki sekinin de aru” [Entering the UN Security Council Is the Responsibility that Japan Should Fulfill], *Chūō Kōron* (January 2005), pp. 126–145; Kitaoka Shinichi, “Anpori kaikaku to chūgoku mondai: iwarenaki nihon hihan o haisuru” [Security Council Reform and the China Issue: Rejecting the Unreasonable Criticism of Japan], *Chūō Kōron* (June 2005), pp. 54–63.
148. Watanabe Akio, “Tōajia kyōdōtai o mezasu nagai reesu ga hajimatta” [The Long Race Aiming at an East Asian Community Has Started], *Chūō Kōron* (December 2004), p. 36.
149. Hiramatsu Shigeo and Komori Yoshihisa, “Amerika ga sōtei suru tōshinakai: Nitchū kaisen boppatsu no kiki” [The East China Sea in American Assumption: The Crisis of Japan–China Naval Battle Outbreak], *Shokun* (March 2006), pp. 38–49.
150. Nakanishi, “Chūka bunmei no honnō o miyamatta.”
151. Kitaoka, “Jōnin rijikoku hairi wa nihon ga hatasu beki sekinin de aru.”
152. Nakajima Mineo, “ODA o toriyame/taichūgoku gaikō no arikata mo minao” [Suspend ODA/Reexamine the Right Approach to China Diplomacy], *Chūō Kōron* (March 2005), pp. 128–135. Noda Nobuo, “Chūgoku ‘teikoku chitsuyo kōchiku’ ni nihon wa taikō senryaku o mochiuru no ka?” [Does Japan have an Opposing Strategy to China’s Construction of an ‘Imperial Order’?], *Chūō Kōron* (November 2004), pp. 72–81.
153. Okamoto and Tanaka, “Hu Jintao seiken o yurugasu ‘aikoku’ bōsō to sekai no shisen”; Tanaka Akihiko, “Sensō no gekigen shita sekai de ‘sensō no rekishi’ to dō mukiau ka” [How to Face ‘War History’ in a World with a Sharp Decrease of Wars], *Chūō Kōron* (September 2005), p. 38.
154. Endō Homare, “Hu Jintao mo te o yaku ‘funsei’ no jittai” [The Truth of ‘Fenqing’ that also Burns Hu Jintao’s Hands], *Chūō Kōron* (August 2005), pp. 94–101.
155. Fewsmith and Rosen, “The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy?,” p. 153. On the increasing influence of think-tanks and academics over Chinese foreign policy, see David Shambaugh, “China’s International Relations Think Tanks,” pp. 575–596, and Bonnie S. Glaser and Phillip C. Saunders, “Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutes: Evolving Roles and Increasing Influence,” *The China Quarterly* Vol. 171 (September 2002), pp. 597–616; Quanshen Zhao, “Impact of Intellectuals and Think Tanks on Chinese Foreign Policy,” in Yufan Hao and Lin Su, eds., *China’s Foreign Policy Making* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 123–138.
156. Thompson, “Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics,” p. 561.
157. For example, one Chinese interlocutor from a PLA research institution strongly disagreed with Beijing’s policy to link Japanese Prime Minister Yasukuni’s visits to bilateral summit meeting, arguing that it was tantamount to putting critical national interest at the hostage of a minor, symbolic matter. Another Chinese academic concurred in a separate interview that because of psychological obsession with history, Beijing’s diplomacy to Japan lacked the same flexibility that it typically applied in the policy to the US or other Western countries. Both interviews were conducted on May 17, 2006.
158. “Japan, China Agree to Conduct Joint Study of Wartime History,” *The Japan Times*, November 17, 2006.
159. By the end of the second round of the joint study, the two sides had decided not to co-write the final report but have each side separately write its own versions of bilateral history texts and exchange written comments if they disagree on controversial points. See “No Common History View with China,” *The Japan Times*, March 21, 2007. Two main obstacles to reaching a consensus existed. One is that the two sides disagreed on the fundamental nature of the Sino-Japanese War, therefore negotiated intensely over the use of the words “advance” vs. “expansion/invasion.” On this question, the Japanese delegation held a more diverse opinion

- than the Chinese delegation, who approached the project from a uniform perspective. The second obstacle is regarding the factual details of certain historical events, such as the exact number of deaths in the Nanjing Massacre. Author's separate interviews with two Chinese participants in the joint study, Beijing, June 4, 2007.
160. For a detailed review of the progresses and defects in Sino-Japanese textbook cooperation programs since the mid-1980s, He, *Overcoming Shadows of the Past*, 2004, pp. 279–282.

Yinan He is an assistant professor at the John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations, Seton Hall University, and a postdoctoral research associate of the China and the World Program at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University during 2007–08.